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AN ACCOUNT OF THE PROGRESS OF THE Reformation of Manners, IN *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*,

And other Parts of *Europe* and *America*.

With some Reasons and plain Directions for our hearty and vigorous Prosecution of this Glorious Work.

In a Letter to a Friend.

To which is added,

The *Special Obligations* of MAGISTRATES, to be diligent in the Execution of the *Penal-Laws* against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, for the Effecting of a *National Reformation*.

The Twelfth Edition with considerable Additions.

LONDON,

Printed and Sold by *Joseph Downing* in *Bartholomew-Close* near *West-Smithfield*, 1704.

By the QUEEN,

A PROCLAMATION,

For the Encouragement of

PIETY and VIRTUE,

And for the Preventing and Punishing of

Vice, *Prophaneness*, and *Immorality*.

ANNE R.

WHEREAS on Our Accession to the Throne, We thought fit, by the Advice of Our Privy Council, to Issue out Our Royal Proclamation, for the Encouragement of *Piety* and *Virtue*, and for the Preventing and Punishing of *Vice*, *Prophaneness*, and *Immorality*: And whereas We have been informed, That Our Laws mentioned in the said *Proclamation* have not been executed according to Our Just Expectation and Commands; We most seriously and religiously considering, That it is an indispensible Duty on Us, to be careful, above all other things, to preserve and advance the Honour and Service of Almighty God, and to discourage and suppress all *Vice*, *Prophaneness*, *Debauche-*

ry, and *Immorality*, which are ſo highly diſpleaſing to God, ſo great a Reproach to Our Religion and Government, and (by means of the frequent ill Examples of the Practicers thereof) have ſo fatal a Tendency to the Corruption of many of Our Loving Subjects, otherwiſe Religiouſly and Virtuouſly diſpoſed, and which, (if not timely remedied) may juſtly draw down the Divine Vengeance on Us and Our Kingdoms: We alſo humbly acknowledging, That We cannot expect the Bleſſing and Goodneſs of Almighty God (by whom Kings and Queens Reign) and on which We entirely rely) to make Our Reign happy and proſperous to Our Self and Our People, nor hope for the Divine Aſſiſtance to deliver Us from the great and imminent Dangers which Our Kingdoms and the true Proteſtant Religion Eſtabliſhed among Us, are in this preſent Juncture threatned with, without a Religious Obſervance of God's Holy Laws: To the Intent therefore, that Religion, Piety, and good Manners may (according to Our moſt hearty Deſire) flouriſh and increaſe under Our Adminiſtration and Government, We have thought fit (by the Advice of Our Privy Council) to iſſue this Our Royal Proclamation, and do hereby declare Our Royal Purpoſe and Reſolution to diſcountenance and puniſh all manner of *Vice*, *Prophaneneſs*, and *Immorality*, in all Perſons of whatſoever Degree or Quality, within this Our Realm, and particularly in ſuch as are employed near Our Royal Perſon; and that for the greater Encouragement of Religion and Morality, We will, upon all Occaſions, diſtinguiſh Perſons of Piety and Virtue, by Marks of Our Royal Favour. And we do expect and require, that all Perſons of Honour, or in place of Authority, will give good Example by their own Virtue and Piety, and to their utmoſt, contribute to the diſcountenancing Perſons of diſſolute and debauched Lives, that they being by that means reduced to Shame and Contempt, for their looſe and evil Actions and Behaviour, may be thereby alſo enforced the ſooner to reform their ill Habits and Practices, and that the viſible Diſpleaſure of good Men towards them, may (as far as it is poſſible) ſupply what the Laws (probably) cannot altogether prevent. And We do hereby ſtrictly enjoin and prohibit all Our Loving Subjects, of what Degree or Quality ſoever, from Playing on the *Lord's-Day* at *Dice*, *Cards*, or any other

other Game whatſoever, either in Publick or Private Houſes, or other Place or Places whatſoever; and do hereby require and command them, and every of them, decently and reverently to attend the Worſhip of God on every Lord's-Day, on Pain of Our higheſt Diſpleaſure, and of being proceeded againſt with the utmoſt Rigour that may be by Law. And for the more effectual Reforming of all ſuch Perſons, who, by reaſon of their diſſolute Lives and Converſations, are a Scandal to Our Kingdom, Our further Pleaſure is, and We do hereby ſtrictly Charge and Command all Our Judges, Mayors, Sheriffs, Juſtices of the Peace, and all other Our Officers, and Miniſters, both Eccleſiaſtical and Civil, and all other our Subjects whom it may concern, to be very vigilant and ſtrict in the Diſcovery, and the effectual Proſecution and Puniſhment of all Perſons who ſhall be guilty of exceſſive *Drinking*, *Blaſphemy*, *Prophane Swearing* and *Curſing*, *Lewdneſs*, *Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*, or other Diſſolute, Immoral, or Diſorderly Practices; and that they take Care alſo effectually to ſuppreſs all Bawdy-Houſes, Publick Gaming Houſes and Places, and other Diſorderly Houſes, and to put in Execution the Statute made in the Nine and Twentieth Year of the Reign of Our late Royal Uncle King *Charles* the Second, Intituled, *An Act for the better Obſervation of the* Lord's-Day, *commonly called* Sunday; and alſo an Act of Parliament made in the Ninth Year of the Reign of Our late dear Brother King *William the* Third, Intituled, *An Act for the more effectual Suppreſſing of Blaſphemy and Prophaneneſs*; and all other Laws now in Force for the Puniſhing and Suppreſſing any of the Vices aforeſaid; and alſo to ſuppreſs and prevent all Gaming whatſoever in Publick or Private Houſes on the *Lord's-Day*, and likewiſe that they take effectual Care to prevent all Perſons keeping Taverns, Chocolate-Houſes, Coffee-Houſes, or other Publick Houſes whatſoever, from ſelling Wine, Chocolate, Coffee, Ale, Beer, or other Liquors, or Receiving or Permitting Gueſts to be or remain in ſuch their Houſes on the Lord's-Day, (except in caſe of Neceſſity and Charity) as they will anſwer it to Almighty God, and upon Pain of Our higheſt Diſpleaſure. And for the more effectual proceeding herein, We do hereby direct and command all Our Judges of Aſſize and Juſtices of the Peace, to give ſtrict Charges at their reſpective

Aſſizes

Aſſizes and Seſſions, for the due Proſecution and Puniſhment of all Perſons that ſhall preſume to offend in any of the kinds aforeſaid, and alſo of all Perſons that, contrary to their Duty, ſhall be remiſs or negligent in putting the ſaid Laws in Execution; and that they do at their reſpective Aſſizes and Quarter-Seſſions of the Peace, cauſe this Our *Proclamation* to be publickly read in open Court, immediately before the Charge is given. And We do hereby further charge and command every Miniſter in his reſpective Pariſh-Church or Chappel, to read or cauſe to be read this Our *Proclamation*, at leaſt Four times in every Year, immediately after Divine Service, and to incite and ſtir up their reſpective Auditories to the Practice of Piety and Virtue, and avoiding of all Immorality and Prophaneneſs. And to the End that all Vice and Debauchery may be prevented, and Religion and Virtue practiſed by all Officers, private-Soldiers, Mariners, and others, who are employed in Our Service, by Sea or Land, We do hereby ſtrictly charge and command all Our Commanders and Officers whatſoever, that they do take Care to avoid all Prophaneneſs, Debauchery, and other Immoralities; and that by their own good and virtuous Lives and Converſations, they do ſet good Examples to all ſuch as are under their Care and Authority, and likewiſe take Care of and inſpect the Behaviour of all ſuch as are under them, and to puniſh all thoſe who ſhall be guilty of any the Offences aforeſaid, as they will be anſwerable for the ill Conſequences of their Neglect herein.

Given at Our Court at St. James's *the Five and Twentieth Day of* February, 1702. *In the Firſt Year of Our Reign.*

GOD Save the QUEEN.

AN

AN ACCOUNT OF THE PROGRESS OF THE Reformation of Manners, &c.

SIR,

I Suppoſe that you have heard of the Attempts that have been made for the Promoting of a *Reformation of Manners*, by the Execution of the *Penal-Laws* againſt *Prophaneneſs* and *Debauchery*, begun by ſome few Perſons of the Church of *England*, and moſt of them private Men: That theſe Endeavours have had a very great Succeſs, (particularly for the Suppreſſing of *Prophane Swearing* and *Curſing*, *Drunkenneſs*, and *Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*, and the giving a Check to the *Open Lewdneſs* that was acted in many of our Streets) and have been publickly and ſolemnly Approved by a conſiderable Number of the *Lords Spiritual* and *Temporal*, and *Honourable Judges* of the Kingdoms of *England* and *Ireland*; and have been countenanced occaſionally, and in another manner, by moſt of the other of our Right Reverend

Reverend Biſhops, in their *Circular Letters*, printed 1699. (of which I ſhall take ſome farther notice.) But you may not be acquainted, That His late Majeſty having this Affair laid before him by one of his Chief Miniſters of State, promiſed the Societies not only his Protection, but Countenance: And that our preſent Illuſtrious QUEEN, ſince the iſſuing out of Her *Proclamation* againſt *Vice* and *Prophaneneſs*, hath been graciouſly pleaſed to ſignifie Her Approbation of this Work: That theſe Endeavours are carrying on in moſt Parts of this Kingdom, and in many of thoſe of *Ireland*, as I could enumerate to you if 'twere neceſſary: and have been applauded and recommended in a publick manner, as fit to be imitated by other Chriſtian States, by the Commiſſioners of ſeveral *French* Churches, who were appointed to take this Affair into their Conſideration; and have been lately very ſolemnly Approved by divers of the Nobility, and by the Commiſſioners of the General Aſſembly of the Church of *Scotland*, where this Work is now ſo far advanced, that beſides the *Societies for Reformation* lately ſet up in other Parts of that Kingdom, there were (we are informed) ſome Months ſince, Thirteen of theſe Societies in the City of *Edinburgh* alone; in which City, the Magiſtrates have, upon this Occaſion, lately erected a new Court againſt *Immorality*; and that 'tis to be hop'd that, with God's Bleſſing, a great part of the Chriſtian World will be influenced hereby; the Account of theſe *Societies* being already Tranſlated into the *French* and *High-Dutch* Languages, and hath been ſome time ſince Tranſlating into the *Latin* by ſeveral Hands, for the propagating the ſame Glorious Deſign in other Nations; by which means a great part of the World will be ſoon acquainted with this Undertaking, and the Succeſs of it, and, it may reaſonably be expected, will be excited to an Imitation:

And

And this may the rather be hop'd, ſince the reſtraining of Men from publick Vices, and open Violations of Religion, hath, I think, ever been thought the great Intereſt and Buſineſs of Government, is what the Laws of civilized Nations, tho' they may be more or leſs ſevere in different Countries, provide againſt, *Papiſts* and *Proteſtants*, *Jews* and *Mahometans*, agree in; and ſince moreover ſo many learned and pious Perſons, in divers parts of *Europe* and *America*, are already ſucceſsfully engaged in Promoting of this Work by Societies, after the Example of *England*.

'Tis certain that a Reverend Divine, who hath been lately in our Northern Plantations in *America*, by the Encouragement of divers of our Biſhops, for the Propagating Chriſtianity there, ordered a whole Impreſſion of the *Account of the Societies* to be printed off, and ſent thither, for the promoting a *Reformation*, by theſe Methods, in thoſe Parts of the World. And this Reverend Perſon, the laſt Month told me, that he thinks they have ſince made a more remarkable *Reformation* there, than is in either of Her Majeſty's Kingdoms.

From *New-England* we are told, That great Care hath been there taken of late for the Puniſhment of *Vice* and *Profaneneſs* by the Methods that are here uſed; and a Gentleman of that Country, in his Letter bearing date *April* 10. 1702. informs us, That ſeveral Societies are formed in *Boſton*, and he thinks that in a little time he ſhall acquaint us of others ſet up in other parts of that Country.

From the Iſland of *Jamaica*, Dr. *Tod*, Rector of St. *Thomas in the Vale*, tells us, That at a general Meeting of the Clergy of that Iſland at St. *Jago de la Vaga*,

Novemb. 27. 1700. by the appointment of their Commiſſary, the Clergy, in conjunction with divers of the Gentlemen of that Country, had formed themſelves into a *Society for Reformation of Manners*, and the *Propagation of Chriſtian Knowledge*; and that the Governour of that Iſland had under his Hand Signed his full Approbation of it, and their Orders.

'Tis affirmed by a Perſon of Integrity, who is come over from *Flanders*, that they have very much ſuppreſſed the *Diſorderly Houſes* in *Bruſſels*, (the *Popiſh Prieſts* in that City having gone about to the *Publick Houſes*, exhorting them to leave off their Irregularities) as he aſſures me they have wholly done the *Muſick-Houſes*, which were generally Houſes of ill Fame, in *Amſterdam* in *Holland*; from whence Monſieur *Bonage* has wrote to a Perſon in *Ireland*, to be informed what Progreſs Religion hath made in that Kingdom ſince *Societies* have been ſet up in it, being, it ſeems, deſirous, as this Gentleman informs me, to engage himſelf in this Work in *Holland*.

By a Letter from *Switzerland*, dated in *Octob.* 1700. we were acquainted, That an *Account* of our *Societies* was tranſlated into the *High-Dutch* Language; and that they were making ſome Progreſs in this Undertaking.

And from *Schaſhauſen* 'twas wrote, *Jan.* 12. 1700. That they rejoiced to hear of our Zeal in *England*, from an Account of our Societies, which was there tranſlated; and that they had Examples of the ſame ſort of Societies.

From *Germany* we have the following Account from Dr. *Frank*, Divinity Profeſſor in the City of *Hall* in *Saxony*, *Jan.* 21. 1700. who writes thus to ſome Perſons

ſons in this Place: *The eminent Succeſs of your Undertakings hath been made known in* Germany, *by the Reverend Dr.* Jablonski, *Chaplain to the newly Crowned King of* Pruſſia, *who hath tranſlated the* Account of the Societies *out of* Engliſh *into the* German *Language. Nor hath this Gentleman's Labours in it proved unſucceſsful: For beſides the Good it hath done to the Souls of many particular Perſons, who have been awakened thereby to a greater Concern for their Spiritual Edification, it hath had a particular good Effect at* Norenburg, *in that it hath mightily put forward and encouraged a* Society, *conſiſting of a great Number of Citizens, who had ſome time before began to meet at each others Houſes upon a Religious Account, and from a ſincere Deſire of the Truth; as a very worthy Perſon hath, by the Requeſt of them all, acquainted me,* &c.

From *Rotterdam*, the famous Monſieur *Jurieu* hearing of theſe Societies, takes notice, in a tranſporting manner, in a Letter to a Divine in *London*, That amidſt the many Societies that were in the World about the Concerns of Gold and Silver, and for bringing the Wealth of the *Indies* into other Countries, he had at laſt heard a moſt reviving Account of pious Perſons united in very ſucceſsful Methods for the Extirpation of *Vice* and *Prophaneneſs*, and the bringing down of the Riches of Heaven; for which he praiſes God, and conceives great Hopes from hence, that thoſe happy Days may enſue to the Chriſtian World which holy Souls ſo ardently deſire and long for.

Monſieur *Oſtervald* (the learned Author of that excellent Book, intitled, *A Treatiſe concerning the Cauſes of the preſent Corruption of Chriſtians, and the Remedies thereof*) tells us, in a Letter dated *April* the 6*th*, 1701. from the Principality of *Neuf-Caſtle*, That he had printed off

there an *Account of our Societies*; and that ſince that was done, the *Pious Deſigns* formed in *England* were there approved, *&c.* And *April* the 11*th* 1701. he again ſays, That their Conſiſtory being laſt Week aſſembled, reſolved to buy up ſome hundreds of the printed Copies of the *Account of the Societies*; and that they were ſent to all the Conſiſtories of that State, in order to diſpoſe them to a *Reformation of Manners*, and to the ſetting up of Schools; and that the Magiſtrates of *Neuf-Caſtle* were addreſſed to by them for *Orders* and *Laws* againſt *Vice* and *Immorality*, which they had already obtained.

A Gentleman at St. *Galle*, in his Letter bearing date the 19*th* of *May* 1701. writes to his Friend in *England*, That the ſetting up of *Societies* was recommended to a large Synod of Divines, at their late Meeting at *Zurich*, as the beſt Expedient for the engaging Men to a Religious courſe of Life: That the *Account* of our *Religious Societies*, which was tranſlated and printed at *Zurich*, was much enquired after: That Orders had been given from other *Proteſtant Cantons*, for the buying up ſome Numbers of them: That Monſieur *Scherer* had put into the *German* Language the *Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners*, which was there in the Preſs, and he hoped would be printed off in a few Days; that 'twas intended to be Dedicated to the States; and that Care was taken to make it known all over *Germany*. In which Country the Pious Doctor *Cramner*, this Gentleman ſays, expreſſes a great Zeal to ſet forward this Work in his Univerſity.

Monſieur *de Moos* writes from *Malans*, in the Country of the *Griſons*, *Sept.* 22. 1701. That at an Aſſembly of Divines that met at *Jais* in that Country the ſecond of that

that Month, a very Advantageous Account of our Deſigns of *Reformation* had been given them; that they would be laid before their Synod when they met; and that they deſigned to appoint a Perſon of Learning and Piety to begin and continue a Correſpondence with one of our *Societies* in *England*.

And from the ſame Country the celebrated Lady, Madam *Hortenſia de Salis*, whom you find honourably mentioned in the Biſhop of *Salisbury*'s printed Letters of *Switzerland*, in her Letter dated at *Cleſt* the tenth of *March* 1702. thus writes: *I cannot ſufficiently declare, how great a Veneration is had for the* Church of England, *the* King, *and the* Illuſtrious Society, *in this Country, by all, in partieular by the Clergy. They are every where prayed for, and remembred, as in our Hearts, ſo in all our Pulpits alſo. I truſt in God* (ſays ſhe) *that as he had always his* Moſes's, Lots, *and* Samuels, *that with-held his Wrath*, &c. *So he will now, in our Days, raiſe up many ſincere Chriſtians, who, by the Example of the* Church of England, *and of the* Illuſtrious Society, *will be encouraged to promote the Good, and puniſh the Bad, according to the Laws and Cuſtoms of every Country.*

An Envoy Extraordinary from one of the greateſt Princes of *Europe*, to the *Swiſs Cantons*, writes in theſe Terms to an *Engliſh* Gentleman, in a Letter dated at *BERN, Septemb.* 10. 1701. *I have diſcours'd with the principal Perſons of this Church and State, and all of them bleſs God for the Succeſs wherewith he has Crowned the Zeal of your* Holy *and* Religious Society, *and are all of them enclined to enter into a Correſpondence*, &c.

A Perſon of great Reputation in *Switzerland* acquaints us, *Sept.* 18. 1701. That Monſieur *Anſillon*, who hath a Com-

a Commission to the *Protestant Cantons* from the King of *Denmark*, has by Letterts to his Correspondents recommended this Work at *Berlin*; and that a Proposal was there made for Translating the *Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners*, into the *Danish* and *Swedish* Languages; and that a Design was there laid of setting up and carrying on of *Societies* in *Denmark* and *Sweeden*, by means of these Translations. He goes on thus in the same Letter: *The Societies in* England *are in such Esteem in those Parts, that on the sixth of* November, 1701. *(their general appointed Fast-Day,) they publickly prayed for the Preservation of them in all the* Protestant Churches *in that Country. I hope there is no* English-man *that hath the least Sparks of Love to his Native Country, but will have in Honour these incomparable* Societies. *If there are any People so impudent, as to speak disrespectfully of them, let them look to it, that it doth not one time or other fare with them, as now goes with—(an Adversary of the* Societies *he means) at* Zurich, *who, I am told, is so ashamed of his having opposed us, since all honest Men are on our side, that he is resolved to leave his Native Country, and go with his Family into some Foreign Parts. These unparallell'd* Societies *in* England *are not only to be regarded for the Honour they bring to their most happy Nation, but far more for the unspeakable Good that they cause to the Church of Christ both at home and abroad, and annunciate a more illustrious state of the Church of God that is expected by the Conversion of* Jews *and* Gentiles. These are his Words, and he adds further these following: *Thus,* dear Sir, *we now find that all the* Helvetick *and* Rhetick *Churches are entirely disposed to propagate* Christian Knowledge, *punish* Vice, *and promote true* Piety, *as the* Honourable Society *invite them to.*

Monsieur

Monſieur *Brink*, Chaplain to the King of *Denmark*, wrote, *March* 2. 1701. to a Reverend Divine in this Kingdom, to ſend him the Books relating to *Reformation* here, in order to his ſetting forward the ſame Deſign in that Kingdom; which was accordingly done; whoſe Endeavours therein, we have reaſon given us to hope, are by this time advantageouſly aſſiſted by ſeveral publick Miniſters at that Court: And we underſtand, that there hath been ſome Months paſt tranſmitted into *Sweeden*, and ſeveral other Countries, the Books of *Reformation*, for the promoting of the Deſign of them likewiſe in thoſe Countries.

Mr. *Peter Zeller*, a very eminent Miniſter in *Zurich* in *Switzerland*, in a Letter of his, dated *Feb.* 6. 1703. does in very affectionate Terms expreſs their common Eſteem of the pious Societies here, and their Expectations of great Advantages to *England*, and to the Church of Chriſt from them. And having mentioned the frequent Earthquakes in and about *Rome*, which he thinks may be Tokens of God's Diſpleaſure to thoſe Places: He adds his Opinion, that he thinks God is pleaſed to vouchſafe to our Nation the happy Preſages of proſperous Times, in the Riſe and Succeſs of thoſe Societies, by whoſe means Religion and Virtue is very much advanced both in our own and other Nations.

Monſieur *Scherer*, in a Letter of his from *Sangall*, of *Jan.* 26. 1703. aſſures us of the reviving of Piety among them, by the report of what is done here by our Societies, which are concerned in Religious Affairs.

And laſtly, A Gentleman of great Character at *Berlin*, in a Letter dated *Feb.* 23, 1703. acquaints us, That there

there were printed in that City Two Thousand of our little Discourses, that have been dispersed in *England* in great Numbers by the Members of our Societies, which are Translated into other Languages: That the *Soldier's Monitor*, written by Dr. *Woodward*, was (to use the Gentleman's own Words) distributed among the Soldiers in their Garrison by the General's Order; that the King of *Prussia* being presented with it by one of his Bishops, and having read and approved it, (as did likewise his Privy Council,) has already given, or will soon give Orders to have a considerable Number of them printed for the Benefit of his Soldiers; that some of them were given to the Prince of *Gotha*, who went from hence the other Day to the King of *Sweeden*, to whom he promised to give an Example; and at the same time he was well assured, that his Majesty would be so well pleased with it, that he would give Orders to have his Army supplyed with the same, and more especially, since there was bound with it, the Discourse against *Swearing*; for which Vice in particular his *Sweedish* Majesty has a great Aversion. The *Soldier's Monitor*, to which is added, the Discourse against *Swearing*, he says, is likewise translated into the *Muscovite* Language, and is designed to be recommended to the Emperour, to his *Czarish* Majesty, and likewise to the Queen of *Poland* (to whom he gives the Epithets of *Pious* and *Virtuous*) who would be apply'd to, to disperse it throughout the *Saxon* Army, *&c.*

I could have mentioned another Kingdom wherein our Endeavours of *Reformation of Manners* seem to have had a very great Influence: But this I forbear, upon some Considerations at present; and the rather, since the Particulars I have given you are, I conceive, not only sufficie it to convince you fully, that the Success of our Methods of *Reformation* here, have given Occasion to Per-

sons

ſons of the Nations beforementioned, to whom an Account of our Proceedings herein have reached, to ſet about the ſame Work; and that it will influence more of thoſe Nations that are remote when it is known to them, by the Tranſlations of the *Account of the Societies* into the more general Languages (that are already perfected, or are, we hear, carrying on) but may moreover give you occaſion to think, that the Providence of Almighty God hath, in a particular manner, favoured this Deſign, eſpecially when you conſider, how, and by what means it was begun, and hath been carried on; and that by his Bleſſing it will prevail over the Oppoſition made to it from either its publick or private Enemies.

And now, *Sir*, give me leave to ſay, Can it become any that would be reckoned Chriſtians, that have this great Affair laid before them, to be unconcerned whether theſe Attempts which have been ſo ſucceſsful for the beating down of *Prophaneneſs* and *Vice*, which have ſo ſpread in the World, be carried on not only in theſe Three Kingdoms, and in our Neighbouring Nations, but through the Chriſtian World; whether the Cauſe of Religion or the Devil's Intereſt prevails, to ſtand Neuter at a time when their Fellow Chriſtians are ſucceſsfully engaged in the Defence of our Religion againſt its Enemies, in their bold Attacques upon it; and frequently with the Hazard of their Lives; as lately at *May-Fair*, where ſome brave Souls were wounded, and one Conſtable was barbarouſly murder'd, in the Sight of the Sun, and almoſt in the Face of the Court, by a Company of Soldiers, who, to the Number of above *Thirty*, as is depoſed upon Oath, fell upon the Civil Officers, and their Aſſiſtants, with their Swords in their Hands, and Oaths and Execrations in their Mouths, without any Provocation, whilſt the Conſtables, with thoſe that aſſiſted them, were endeavouring to prevent the abomi-

nable Diſorders that were there committed, in Obedience to the Commands of Her Majeſty, and by immediate Direction from the Juſtices of the Peace of that County.

But, *Sir*, to ſpeak with a little more freedom to you, Can you think it either juſtifiable or honourable for one under your Character to ſatisfie your ſelf with talking gravely and judiciouſly againſt the Impieties of the Age, with ſpeaking kindly of thoſe that are concerned in the Suppreſſing of them; or even with acting ſo faintly in this matter, as to diſcourage any that may be concerned with you in it from the Proſecution of it; and to ſpeak plainly, to contribute, by your Neutrality or Lukewarmneſs, to the giving of Boldneſs and Strength to the Oppoſers of this Undertaking, and in conſequence, I doubt, to the ſhedding of the Blood, and to the utter Ruine of ſome of the beſt Subjects to the Government, if not ſome of the beſt Chriſtians in the Nation, who, I am told, are ſo far from being diſcouraged (the heartieſt of them I mean) by the Oppoſition and Sufferings they met with from the Enemies of *Reformation*, (who have a freſh Occaſion given them to conſider, of whom the Blood that is already ſhed, and that which may be ſpilt in the Work of *Reformation*, may be required) that they ſeem to be animated thereby with greater Zeal for their God, as the Martyrs of old were by the Death of their Fellow-Chriſtians. No, ſurely this is a time for all that carry the Face of Chriſtians, to exert the utmoſt of their Intereſt and Authority, to join their Heads, Hearts, Hands, and Purſes, in this Noble Undertaking.

This therefore is what I moſt earneſtly recommend to you, that you would be of the happy Number of thoſe that give their hearty and zealous Aſſiſtance in this pious

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Enterprize, wherein the Honour of Almighty God and the Good of the World ſeem to be ſo much concerned, and thereby become a Benefactor to Mankind. And that you may not be diſcouraged from Engaging in it for want of Direction how to promote it, I have herewith ſent you ſuch Materials as may enable you to ſet about it with great Advantage after you have humbly ſupplicated the Divine Direction and Aid in ſo weighty an Affair; and which will, I conceive, leave you with leſs Excuſe, if you do not in ſome meaſure what you ſhall conclude, upon your moſt ſolemn Deliberation upon this Propoſal, it behoves you to do therein.

You have, *Sir*, firſt of all, in the *Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners in* England *and* Ireland, which I have ſent you, a Narrative of the *Beginning* and *Succeſs* of the *Endeavours of Reformation*, and a general Scheme of the *Undertaking*, with a Perſwaſive to Men of all *Ranks* and *Denominations*; and a particular Addreſs to *Miniſters* and *Magiſtrates*, who have their ſpecial Obligations laid before them to be zealous in it: To which are added, His Majeſty's *Proclamation* againſt *Prophaneneſs* and *Vice*, and the *Act of Parliament* againſt prophane *Swearing* and *Curſing*, which Miniſters are to read Four times a Year in their Churches and Chappels; and an *Abſtract of the Laws* which Magiſtrates are to Execute for the Suppreſſing of *Prophaneneſs* and *Debauchery*, &c. And in the little Book, call'd, *A Help to Reformation*, beſides the *Proclamation*, *Act of Parliament*, and *Abſtract* beforementioned, (which are printed for the the Uſe of Magiſtrates and Miniſters) Magiſtrates have *Forms of Warrants*, and of a *Regiſter* in thoſe Caſes; Inferior Officers have Inſtructions laid before them for their Executing of their Office with the greateſt Advantage; and Private Perſons have *Prudential Rules* for the giving of *In-*

formations, and the raiſing of *Societies*; which *Societies*, I muſt obſerve to you, have been, from the Beginning of this Undertaking, and will ſtill be, the great Engines for the carrying of it on: And that therefore the moſt conſiderable Service that can generally be done in it, will be, in the *Forming of Societies*: Inſomuch, that this Work will ſeldom fail to go on too ſlowly, and not without ſome Obſtruction in that place where there is not a Society of this kind; but much more eaſily, ſteadily and ſucceſsfully, in any Town or Village where there is one in or near it, tho' it conſiſts but of a few Perſons. I have likewiſe, *Sir*, ſent you ſome *Blank Warrants* for particular Offences, which thoſe that give Informations are to keep by them, and to fill them up when they have any Informations to give againſt any prophane and vicious Perſons, with the Offenders Names, Offences, Places of Abode, *&c.* and to carry them thus filled up to the Magiſtrates; and being ſigned by them after their Informations are taken upon Oath, to ſend or carry them to the beſt diſpoſed Conſtables to be executed, for the Eaſe of Magiſtrates and their Clerks, who when they happen to be no hearty Friends to theſe Proceedings, will have the leſs occaſion to be prejudiced againſt them, and conſequently will the leſs diſcourage them, when they have not the Trouble of ſo much as writing, filling up, or ſending out of a Warrant. You have moreover ſent you ſome *Liſts* of the Names of a vaſt Number of *Lewd* and *Diſorderly Perſons*, beſides *Common Swearers*, *Drunkards*, &c. who, by the Diligence chiefly of only one Society of Perſons, who apply themſelves principally to the Suppreſſing of *Lewd* and *Infamous Houſes*, have been brought to Puniſhment in or near the City of *London*. By which you may be more ſenſible, what a horrid Nurſery of *Prophaneneſs* and *Debauchery*,

Debauchery, what a Sink of *Uncleanneſs* this City would have been, and what ground we have to believe, that *Licentiouſneſs* and *Irreligion* would have more and more prevail'd in this Nation, had it not been for the Endeavours of the Societies; and that you may be more fully convinc'd with what more Advantage Men proceed in Societies, than they can poſſibly do alone; tho' I am apt to think, that the Caſuiſts will not tell you, that Men are not to act ſingly at ſuch a Juncture as this, for the Suppreſſing of the publick Diſhonour of the *Name*, the *Day*, and the *Laws* of *God*, when they can't find any to unite with; that they are not to endeavour to do that Good that is in their Power to do, becauſe they can't do as much Good as they would. I muſt add, that you may likewiſe very much promote this Work, by Influencing of Magiſtrates to do their Duty vigorouſly herein; by furthering in as many Places as you can the Choice of good Officers in Corporations, who will have a ſence of the Obligations that their Oath and Office lay them under, to endeavour to be ſerviceable in this Matter; and by letting Conſtables know how great a Power they have for the Suppreſſing all publick Diſorders of this kind: And by endeavouring, by your ſelf and Friends, to encline them to exert their Power, in going about into Streets, Markets, and other Publick Places, on Week-Days, for the taking up of *Drunkards*, *Swearers*, &c. and carrying of them before Magiſtrates; and on the *Lord's-Day*, by Inſpecting into Publick-Houſes, for the preventing of *Tipling*; and by taking up of *Drovers*, *Carriers*, &c. that travel on that Day, and ſuch as carry their Wares or Goods about the Streets to their Cuſtomers, or are found at unlawful *Sports* and *Paſtimes*, as they are directed in the *Help to Reformation*. One or two Conſtables that ſhall thus exerciſe their Office, will be able very much, if not wholly, to prevent all

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Disorders of this kind, in most Cities and Corporations of the Nation. I am assured, that in divers Corporations of this Kingdom, as well as in *Ireland*, religious Men have voluntarily taken the Constable's Office upon them, for the more effectual carrying on of this Design. Herein then your Endeavours are like to be more serviceable than in any other thing that I can easily instance, unless it be in the promoting of the * giving of *Informations* against Offenders, or in the raising *Societies*; by which *Societies* many proper Measures will be thought of, and this Undertaking be put upon the most lasting Foundation. And these are the Methods which we find recommended by the Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*, in his *Circular Letter*, dated *April* 4. 1699. in which the Bishops of that Province, in their joint Letter concurred. † The remarkable Words of which Letter are these: *Every pious Person of the Laity should, if need be, be put in Mind, that he ought to think himself obliged to use his best Endeavours to have such Offenders punished by the Civil Magistrates, as can be no otherwise amended; and that when he hears his Neighbour* Swear, *or* Blaspheme the Name of God, *or sees him offend in* Drunkenness, *or* Prophanation of the Lord's-Day, *he ought to give the Magistrate Notice of it. In such a Case to be called an* Informer, *will be so far from making any Man odious in the Judgment of sober Persons, that it will tend to his Honour, when he makes it appear by his unblameable Behaviour, and the Care that he takes of himself and his Family, that he doth it purely for the Glory of God, and the Good of his Brethren. Such well-disposed Persons as are resolved upon this, should be encouraged to meet as often as they can, to consult how they may most discreetly and effectually manage it in the Places where they live.* Here then Ministers are obliged by their Bishops to put the Laity in Mind of giving of Informa-

*See the Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners in England and Ireland, p. 58, 59, 60, &c.

†The Arch-Bishop of Canterbury's Circular Letter to the Bishops of his Diocess, p. 4, 6.

formations to Magiſtrates againſt Prophaneneſs and Vice, as a *matter of Duty*, and an *honourable thing*; and to encourage them to *meet frequently together*; and *to conſult how* they may diſcreetly and effectually manage it in the places where they live. And in the fourth Page of this *Letter*, the *Clergy* are directed to invite the Church Wardens of their ſeveral Pariſhes, and other pious Perſons among the Laity, to join with them in the Execution of the moſt probable Methods that can be ſuggeſted for the carrying on a Reformation of Manners; and we are told, that from ſuch Meetings we may expect happy Effects. And in the ſame *Page* 'tis obſerved, that from ſuch Meetings happy Advances have been already made towards a *Reformation of Manners*, which is expreſſed in theſe Terms; *From the viſible Succeſs of that Noble Zeal wherewith ſo many about the great* * *Cities in my Neighbourhood do promote true Piety, and a Reformation of Manners.*

* London and Weſtminſter.

And in his Grace's Letter to the Arch Deacons and the reſt of the Clergy of the Dioceſs of St. *David*, publiſhed the latter end of the laſt Summer, 1703. his Grace was pleaſed to expreſs himſelf in theſe Terms, 'There are a great many Religious and Worthy Perſons 'in many Parts of the Kingdom, who do ſtill make it "their Buſineſs to Promote the Execution of good Laws: "And I hope any little Indiſcretion which may happen "among ſome few of them, will not be made a handle "to diſparage all ſuch Uſeful Proceedings. And tho' I "am ſenſible that it is not meerly the Fear of the Law "which muſt make People true Chriſtians, yet, how-"ever, great Good may be done by ſuch Means, thro' "God's Bleſſing: And they who at the firſt are reſtrained "from doing Evil out of Fear of Puniſhment, may become "Virtuous upon more Spiritual Motives. Likewiſe many "Tempta-

The Arch-Biſhop of Canterbury's *Letter to the Reverend the Arch-Deacons and the reſt of the Clergy of the Dioceſs of St.* David, *p.* 9, 10.

"Temptations may be removed out of the way, especially of Young People, much open Scandal and Dishonour to God and our Holy Religion may be prevented: And we have also Reason to hope, that if the Edge of the Law, and the Authority of the Magistrate, be turned against Impiety and Immorality, God will not look upon our Sins to be National; and so we may prevent those Judgments which otherwise they would bring upon us: For these Reasons, I think, you will do God, and our Church, and Nation, good Service, if you will make it your Endeavour to give the World all the Marks of your Respect of those Worthy Magistrates, or other Gentlemen, and also of Inferiour Persons whom you see Zealous in the Cause of God and Religion, and excite others to follow their Example.

Now then, *Sir*, you see the Undertaking I recommend to you to engage in, is called by our great Metropolitan, the Cause of God and Religion: And you have moreover the declared Judgment before you of most of our Learned Prelates concerning our giving of Informations, and our associating for the consulting upon the most probable Methods of *Reformation*, and their Judgment with the beforementioned Approbation of Societies, (published in the *Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners*) of so many Persons celebrated for Wisdom, and in high Stations in the Church and State, who have herein not only declared their Opinion, *That the Design of putting the* Penal-Laws *in Execution, for the suppressing of* Prophaneness *and* Debauchery, *is for the Honour of Almighty God, and tends to the Advancement of Piety and Virtue, and the publick Good both of Church and State, and cannot fail of being approved by all good Men; But that the Method likewise (as the carrying of it on by Societies) is most proper*

proper, and, with the Bleſſing of God attending it, is moſt likely to prove effectual for the promoting a Reformation of Manners. Theſe things, I ſay, will afford you an Argument to ſtop the Mouths of ſuch Perſons as either from unhappy Principles, or their Unwillingneſs to be reformed themſelves, may be endeavouring to raiſe Objections againſt the giving of Informations, and the Meetings of pious Perſons, to concert the moſt adviſable Methods of Suppreſſing *Prophaneneſs* and *Vice*, and the Promoting of *Piety* and *Virtue*, which we call in other Terms, *Societies for Reformation of Manners.*

But if theſe things will not ſilence them, you may then ask them, whether they can in Truth think it does become thoſe that pretend to have a Love for God and their Neighbour, contentedly to hear, without taking any Notice of it, ſuch a multitude that call themſelves Chriſtians, uſing, without Fear or Shame, the moſt horrid *Oaths* and *Execrations* in their ordinary Converſation, even imprecating Damnation on themſelves and others, as an Ornament of Speech; to ſee *Drunkenneſs* paſs among them for good Humour, and *Lewdneſs* for good Breeding; *Publick Houſes* to become Neſts for diſorderly and profligate Perſons, or Stews for the Entertainment of Mens Luſts in all parts of the Nation; * *Sodomites* (who have been but rarely heard of in this Nation till the laſt Age) to have their appointed Places of Meeting for their acting their abominable Villanies, and to encreaſe their Numbers; and Herds of *Lewd Women* to be continually ſoliciting of Men to Lewdneſs in the open Streets; the *Lord's Day* prophaned in the moſt impudent manner, by Mens following of their Trades or ordinary Callings, even keeping open Markets on it, or ſpending it in Gaming, Tipling, and Exceſs; in ſhort, to ſee their GOD publickly diſhonoured and blaſphemed, and his Laws trampled

* *Since the Trial and Puniſhment of the Sea-Captain for a Sin of this kind, Three Perſons, by the Diligence of a* Society for Reformation, *were found guilty of* Sodomy *before the Lord Chief Juſtice* Holt *the laſt* Lent Aſſizes *at* Maidſtone, *and were accordingly executed. And about two Months ſince one was brought to Puniſhment for a Sin of this kind in* London, *& ſeveral others have been diſcovered, and have very narrowly eſcaped.*

pled on, their Religion profeſſedly attacked, and multitudes of Souls thus to go on in a full Cariere to deſtruction, and their Country thereby to be in manifeſt danger of being ruined, when 'tis ſo much in their Power, in this happy Juncture more eſpecially, to prevent theſe Enormities, which are attended with ſuch dreadful Conſequences, by their joining their Aſſiſtance with their Fellow-Chriſtians, in furthering the Execution of the known Laws of the Land againſt them, which ſo many Thouſand Magiſtrates and Inferior Officers have Oaths and Truſts upon them to ſee executed, (how ſhamefully ſoever the generality of them have neglected it): And, on the other ſide, whether it is not a moſt deſirable thing, and of mighty Advantage to Religion, that the greateſt Temptations to the Sins, to which Men are either accuſtomed, or have a natural Propenſity to, ſhould be taken as much as may be out of their way, and the Avenues to them ſtopped, that we might converſe with our Neighbours, or at leaſt go abroad in the World, without the greateſt danger of wounding our Conſciences, or of being laugh'd at and ſcorned for behaving our ſelves as becomes Chriſtians; to have Men reſtrained from an idle and vicious Courſe of Life, and be thereby brought to take up with honeſt and uſeful Employments; to have the *Lord's-day* and other publick *Faſt-days* obſerved in a ſolemn and due manner; to have *Stews* rooted out, and the Streets cleanſed from lewd and impudent Women, and deteſtable *Sodomites*, that infeſt them; to have Men reſtrained from broaching horrid *Blaſphemies*, from *prophane Swearing* and *Curſing*; to have Men kept from depriving themſelves of their Reaſon, and from making themſelves Beaſts by *exceſſive Drinking*; to have publick Houſes kept within their true and reaſonable Uſe and Deſign; from being Receptacles for Perſons to ſpend their

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Time and Money in them on Sacred and common Days; to ruine themſelves, and beggar their Families by their *Drunkenneſs* and *Debauchery*; to have the moſt abominable Diſorders, the execrable Impieties of our moſt ſcandalous *Play-Houſes*, thoſe Nurſeries of Vice and Prophaneneſs, (whither our Nobility and Gentry are ſo frequently ſent to learn their Accompliſhments in their younger Years) ſuppreſſed; to have Religion delivered from the Contempt that prophane and vicious Men have ſo much brought upon it by their Impunity, and publick Countenance in their open and inſolent Violations of it; to have their wicked Combinations broke, and frequent and publick Examples of Prophaneneſs and Vice taken out of publick View, National Sins (that bring National Judgments) ſuppreſs'd, Virtue appear honourable and deſirable, Vice infamous and deteſtable; and laſtly, Men brought to a Regard to Sacred things, to Conſideration, and a ſerious Enquiry into the Nature of Religion, and in time, with God's Bleſſing, to the Love of it, and this by the due Execution of the Penal-Laws againſt *Prophaneneſs* and *Debauchery*, in Conjunction with all the other pious and proper Methods, as of *Inſtruction, Admonition, Reproof*, of diſperſing of *Books* for the awakening Men to a ſenſe of their Sins, and concern for their Souls, the exciting them to *Family Duty*, and the promoting the *Education of Poor Children* in the Principles of Religion, *&c.* that are taken by the Societies for this end. When they have allowed theſe things to be ſo highly deſirable and neceſſary, as that unleſs they are in ſome meaſure effected, or at leaſt ſome other extraordinary Methods are ſet on foot then are at preſent purſued, there appears no probability that the Tide of Wickedneſs will be ſtopped, and Religion flouriſh among us; you may then ask them further, whether theſe things are not what the Societies for Reformation do not only di-

rectly purſue, but have ſo much already promoted; that how bad ſoever our State is with reſpect to theſe Matters, yet that 'tis undoubtedly far better, generally ſpeaking, than 'twas when theſe Endeavours begun, when we were under ſuch unhappy Circumſtances, (which I forbear to mention) that if this Undertaking had not been ſet on foot, we were, I conceive, likely to have been one of the moſt debauched Nations in Principles and Practice, perhaps in the Chriſtian World. If they will deny theſe things, which they will not without great Immodeſty, you may then deſire them honeſtly to give you their Reaſons for their contrary Sentiments, rather than ſecretly to raiſe Prejudices againſt this Deſign; and that they would alſo at the ſame time propoſe, as is, I think, reaſonable they ſhould do, other more Chriſtian and Practicable Methods for the retrieving of Virtue and Religion among us, which, as they are profeſſed Chriſtians, they will allow to be neceſſary to be endeavoured in one way or other. And if they can prove to you, which they can never do, in Contradiction, I conceive, to holy Writ, and the general Conſent of Mankind to the contrary, that our joining our Endeavours in a regular way, for the Suppreſſing of Prophaneneſs and Vice, and the promoting of Religion by the other beforementioned Methods, is not a Chriſtian Undertaking, it will then appear to you more reaſonable and honourable for them either ſecretly to undermine, or publickly to oppoſe it, after it hath moreover been declared, by ſo many Perſons in Authority, to be for the publick good, both of Church and State, and the moſt likely way of promoting a National Reformation, and hath evidently proved ſo ſucceſsful for this end. But till this is done, they muſt give us leave to think, that ſuch Perſons as, out of a Love to God and Man, are employed in endeavouring, by legal and proper Methods, the preventing the Deſtruction of

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ſo great a Number of Souls in our own and other Kingdoms, and of National Judgments, are engaged in a bleſſed Work; from which, 'tis to be hoped, that neither their unaccountable Prejudices and Reproaches, nor the Difficulties and Sufferings which are brought upon them by their Means, from profligate Perſons, in their diſcharging their Duty therein, will diſcourage or deter them; and that 'tis exceedingly much for the Honour of this Undertaking, that after ſo many Thouſand Perſons have been puniſhed for their wicked Practices, and a far greater Number muſt in all Reaſon be ſuppoſed to have been reſtrained, in ſome meaſure at leaſt, from their ſinful Indulgencies, within the *Thirteen* Years that this Deſign hath been purſued, no Man, that I hear of, ſince the firſt Oppoſition to this Enterprize in its Infancy, hath ventured his Reputation ſo far, as to publiſh with a Name, any Objections againſt it, to tell us any ill Conſequences that it hath produced to either Church or State, to charge any Vices on thoſe that have been employed in the forming and carrying of it on, or Irregularities in their Conduct of this Undertaking, tho' in all this time the Enemies of Reformation have ſurely had a ſufficient Opportunity to conſider of theſe Matters; ſo that this Deſign ſtands at this time ſo fair in all Reſpects with the World, that even ſince the publick Approbation of the Societies by many of our Biſhops, &c. in the printed Account of them 1698. and of almoſt all the reſt of them in their Paſtoral Letters beforementioned, one of that Reverend Body, the Lord Biſhop of *Gloceſter*, in his printed Sermon preach'd to the Societies 1699. tells them, 'That the Service they are employed in is incom-'parably the moſt noble and highly Praiſe-worthy that 'it could be poſſible for them to be engaged in. And as 'for Jealouſies of ill Conſequences of their Societies (he 'ſays) he never heard one wiſe Word ſaid on that

The Lord-Bp. of Glouceſter's Sermon to the Societies for Reformation, preach'd June 26. 1699. p. 30.

'Topick, and perſwaded himſelf he never ſhould: And
'then profeſſes the greateſt Hope he had that God hath
'ſtill Mercy in ſtore for us, is from the excellent Spirit
'with which he hath endued ſo great a Number of good
'Chriſtians among us, for the running down of Wicked-
'neſs, by the moſt juſtifiable Means, in their reſpective
'Stations; and the Encouragement that His Majeſty hath
'given to them.

The Lord Bp. of Ely's *Sermon to the Societies for Reformation, preach'd* Dec. 30. 1700.

The Lord Biſhop of *Ely*, in his Sermon preached on the ſame ſolemn Occaſion, not only highly commended and encouraged the Zeal of thoſe that are engaged in Societies for the carrying on of a Reformation, but declared, "That he never heard that any of the Perſons "that were concerned in the Work of Reformation, were "chargeable with any of the Vices that they were con-"cerned in Suppreſſing; and that they were Men of "Virtue, *&c.* and fit Perſons to be employed in this glo-"rious Undertaking.

The Lord Bp. of Salisbury's *Sermon to the Societies for Reformation, preach'd* March 25. 1700. *p.* 26, 27, 28.

The Lord Biſhop of *Salisbury*, in his Sermon preach'd *March* 1700. hath theſe Expreſſions, ſpeaking of the Endeavours of the Societies: "It gives us ſome ſmall be-"ginnings of Hope, that in and about this great City, "there has been for ſome Years a Spirit ſtirring, that "looks like a Reviving, as if our dry Bones could live "again: Bleſſed be God for this door of Hope which he is "thus opening; and bleſſed be they of the Lord who have "offered themſelves ſo willingly before Him, and before all "the People; their Names ſhall be of a good Savour in the "preſent, and in the ſucceeding Generations, who have "begun to ſet forward ſo noble a Deſign, to put a ſtop "to ſo many vicious Practices, and to raiſe a Spirit of "true Piety among us. Theſe are the *Salt* of the Earth, "the *Pillars* of it, and the *Light* of the World.

The

The Lord Bishop of *Chester*, in his Sermon preach'd to the Societies *March* 30. 1701. applied himself in these Terms to the Persons concerned in the Reformation of Manners: "You who are concerned in Societies, on "purpose for the promoting this great and noble De- "sign, have, no doubt, met with great Opposition, espe- "cially when you first entered upon it: but by how "much the greater that was, by so much the greater "will your Reward be. The most difficult part of your "Work is already over, and your Progress for the future "will be daily more easie. You have the Hearts and "Prayers of all good Men with you; yea, the Almighty "Lord and Governour of the World is on your side. "Since it is his Cause you have undertaken you need "not fear, tho' all the Powers of Earth and Hell should "be mustered up against you. Go on therefore coura- "giously in the Work you have so happily begun, and "in which you have hitherto met with Success beyond "your Hopes; many even of the most remote Parts of "the Nation have already followed you, and the rest "when they shall come to be better acquainted with it, "may be influenced by your Example, till by degrees "such a general Reformation may insue, as may make "this a happy Nation, and may render your Names for "ever Blessed who have been the chief Instruments of "it.

The Lord Bp. of Chester's Sermon to the Societies for Reformation, preach'd March 31. 1701.

The Reverend Dr. *Kennet*, in his Sermon preach'd to the Societies last *Decemb.* 1701. says thus: 'Firm 'Alliances and strong Confederacy was needful to pull 'down the Empire of Sin and Wickedness. A Mercy of 'God that Men of Honour and Conscience fell into a 'happy Understanding, and joined Hearts and Hands to 'reduce the exorbitant Power of Satan. My Brethren, 'Divine Wisdom did direct you, &c. Your voluntary

The Reverend Dr. Kennett's Sermon to the Societies for Reformation, preach'd Dec. 11. 1701.

'Societies

'Societies to ſuppreſs Vice and Immorality raiſe not the Jealouſie of your Governours, they are wiſer and better; they only raiſe the Envy of the Wicked, and the Fury of Hell. The Devil and their earthly Fiends do know, that you have now an Army of Chriſtians to engage their ſpiritual Powers, with all proſpect of Succeſs to your glorious Expedition.------ Your want of greater Succeſs has been owing to the Obſtruction and Oppoſition from the Adverſaries of God and Goodneſs, who have put *Stumbling-Blocks*, and even Snares in your way------ The Wonder is, that God ſhould bleſs ſo ſmall a Beginning with ſo great an Encreaſe of Proſperity and happy Effects; *viz.* raiſe the Envy of the Wicked, when I ſay, that the Fame of our *Engliſh Societies* to ſuppreſs *Vice* and *Prophaneneſs*, has ſpread into many Lands. The ſeveral *Accounts of our Societies*, have been Tranſlated into many Languages: The good Example has been followed in ſome Foreign Parts, from whence Letters have been often ſent hither from Men of the higheſt Character, to extol this publick Spirit of our Nation, and to pray for the Almighty's Bleſſing on it---Within a few Years, by the working of this publick Spirit, a Multitude of Sinners have been reprov'd, and to appearance at leaſt have been reform'd; by a moderate Calculation, no leſs than Thirty Thouſand Perſons have been convicted for *prophane Swearing and Curſing*, near the ſame Number of *Lewd and Diſorderly Perſons* have been brought to a merciful Puniſhment, and were thereby reclaim'd from their Vices, or at leaſt reſtrained from the publick Scandal of them, *&c.* Above One Hundred Thouſand *Books of Religion*, and *Diſſwaſives from the Vices of the Age* have been given away. All the Inhabitants of this City can atteſt this Truth, that of late Years *Lewdneſs* and *Prophaneneſs* have been viſibly decreas'd, *&c.* 'Tis, I think, worthy the Care of our

Clergy

'Clergy to countenance those Persons of their Parish 'who have voluntarily engaged to carry on the Work 'of Righteousness and Judgment, of being Fellow-workers 'in Converting of Sinners, and Saving of Souls.'

The Lord Bishop of *Oxford*, in his Sermon preach'd to the Societies for Reformation of Manners *March* 1702. hath these Expressions: 'Since the Design and 'Tendency of the *Son of God*'s taking our Nature upon 'him, and of his whole Transaction in that Nature, was 'to extirpate Wickedness and Vice, and promote Purity 'and Holiness among Men, what an unspeakable Comfort 'and Encouragement must this Doctrine afford to all 'those that are seriously concerned in that Glorious At-'tempt of Reforming a loose Age. *Suffer* then *the Word 'of Exhortation*, and of Consolation too, *Ye Brave and truly Heroick Souls*, who have enter'd into a holy Con-'federacy, *not only against Flesh and Blood*, but also, *a-'gainst Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of 'the Darkness of this World, against Spiritual Wickedness 'in high places.* Your Adversaries are numerous and powerful, *The Prince of the Power of the Air*, with his 'Rulers and Companies, and *the Children of Disobedience* upon Earth, *in whom he worketh*, all evil Spirits, and all wicked Men; and from these ye must expect the most vigorous and obstinate Opposition: *But be not afraid of their Terrours*, remember, that the Battle is not yours, but God's; that the Cause in which you are engag'd is his, to whose absolute Dominion Heaven, and Earth, and Hell, Angels, and Men, and Devils must submit, and whom no Counsel or Power can oppose.'

The Lord Bp. of Oxford's Sermon to the Societies for Reformation, preach'd Dec. 30.

'If those Generous and Publick Spirits are deservedly 'Honour'd and Admir'd, who are instrumental in break-'ing the Power of Earthly Tyrants, and vindicating the

'just Liberties of Men from their Oppression, how much 'higher must their Characters rise, who are Instruments 'in the Hands of God for opposing that universal Tyran-'ny which the Devil, the Prince of the Air, would ex-'ercise over the Souls of Men, for breaking the Fetters 'wherewith he enslaves them, and bringing them into 'the Service of God, which is perfect Freedom?

'Those Fools, that *make a Mock at Sin*, and a Jest of 'Religion, those despicable Wretches, *who serve the Devil 'and divers Lusts*, and are Vassals to their own brutish 'Appetites and Affections, may despise and revile you: 'But so would they have dealt with the *Son of God*, had 'they lived when he was upon Earth, and so did the 'Wicked of that Age treat him, and for the same Reason; 'and surely, *when you consider him that endur'd such Contra-'dictions of Sinners against himself*, you will not for any Re-'proaches you shall suffer from such, for his Sake and Ser-'vice, *grow weary and faint in your Minds*: You will go on 'with Alacrity, when you are assur'd of the Countenance 'and Encouragement of your Governours; when your 'most Gracious Queen, in the very Beginning of Her 'Reign, has publickly own'd the Cause you are engag'd 'in; and when you may with the greatest Confidence, 'depend upon the Value and Esteem, the Love and good 'Wishes, the fervent Prayers and best Assistance of all 'wise and good Men. You will persevere to the End in 'this God-like Employment, when it affords you the 'Glorious Prospect of being found, when your Lord shall 'call you hence, doing that which he himself was doing 'when he was here. With what Extasies of Joy will 'one so found be transported at the Approach of Death?

The Reverend Dr. Stanhope.

The Reverend Dr. *Stanhope*, in his Sermon preached to the Societies, *Decemb.* 28. 1702. says thus,

"The

" The End you propose to your selves by these Societies, is, " without Dispute, commendable and good; Approved " by all whose Approbation is of value; Countenanc'd in " particular manner by that Pious Queen of ever precious " Memory, &c. Enforced frequently by His late Majesty, " and now afresh by Her present Majesty. But still, " though back'd and supported with all these Advan- " tages, Reformation of Manners, almost above any o- " ther Undertaking, is certain to encounter with a World " of Difficulties and Prejudices. I dare presume, upon " leave in your Names, to declare, that you know not " how to wish any thing more for the general Reputa- " tion and Advantage of the Work you have undertaken, " than that all Persons, fit to be satisfied with the Me- " thods as well as Design, would strictly enquire into " your Orders, the Caution, the Prudence, and the En- " deavours, that no Irregularity shall blemish the Ma- " nagement of them.

Dean of Canterbury his Sermon to the Societies for Reformation, preach'd Dec. 28. 1702.

" It is so far from being a Comfort or an Abatement, " as to be indeed the highest Aggravation of our Folly " and our Sorrows, to enjoy the best Laws and the " happiest Constitution, if we turn the one into a dead " Letter, and will not suffer our selves to be bless'd by " the other. But bless'd by either we can never be, ex- " cept effectual Care be taken for the exemplary Pu- " nishment of Wickedness, which if triumphant, and " once an Over-match for Authority and Virtue, will " soon subvert the very Foundations upon which all Go- " vernment stands, and must, in the course of things, " prove our swiftest, our heaviest, and most irreparable " Destruction.

" Pray let any serious Man consider, Is it our Secu- " rity, our Honour, to have wholsome Laws; and can " it be infamous to endeavour that we shall have them

" to no purpoſe? Is this to be Subjects and Patriots? Is
" this to be good Men and Chriſtians, to think Civility
" obliges us to ſee the moſt ſacred things inſulted and
" trodden under Foot, without vindicating or taking any
" notice of the Affront? Did Martyrs ever dare to die
" for Religion, when the Laws of the State were againſt
" it; and have not we the Courage to ſpeak or ſhew
" any Concern for Religion, when the Conſtitution is
" on our ſide, and all for fear that they who have no
" regard to Religion, ſhould hate or revile us for calling
" them to account? Can any Fidelity oblige us to flat-
" ter Men in Wickedneſs, or the Rules of good Breed-
" ing ſuperſede thoſe of the Bible and our Statute-Book?
" The Heathen Orator could ſay, that no Friendſhip
" binds againſt the Common Intereſt; And is it then
" a Bar to the higher and antecedent Engagements of
" Oaths and Vows, and Sacramental Covenants ſuper-
" added to the Advantage of the Publick; let us not,
" I beſeech you, continue to delude our ſelves with
" falſe Notions and empty Names, for ſuch are Honour,
" Decency, and Friendſhip, when ſet in Oppoſition to
" Virtue, Religion, and the Common Good: nay, they
" are worſe than empty Names, they are the Honour
" of *Conſpirators*, the Decency of *Paraſites*, the Friend-
" ſhip of *Banditti* and *Murderers*.

" Light and Darkneſs are not more diſtant than are
" this venomous Brood from you good Men, whoſe
" only Buſineſs and Deſire it is to reſtrain thoſe Exor-
" bitancies, which no good Man can, or ought, patiently
" to ſee rampant and out-braving the Laws of God and
" Man by their Impunity, *&c.*

" The only part remaining for me on this Occaſion,
" is to ſay, For all the Good ye have already done the

" Cauſe

'Cauſe of God and Virtue, bleſſed be ye of the Lord, &c.

The Biſhop of *Chicheſter*, in his Sermon preached on the ſame Occaſion, *March* 30*th*, 1703. thus expreſſed himſelf. 'Almighty God expects that his Honour ſhou'd 'be righted, his Juſtice vindicated amongſt Men, by 'their making ſuch Laws as ſhall beſt anſwer that end, 'and by ſupporting thoſe Laws by a due and vigorous 'Execution, as the Caſe ſhall require, &c. *The Lord Biſhop of* Chicheſters *Sermon to the Societies for Reformation, preach'd* March 30. 1703.

'When Matters are come to this Extremity, when the 'Provocations run high, that Authority is affronted, 'and the moſt ſacred things prophaned; that Men make 'a Mock at Sin, and it walks abroad with a bare-faced 'Impudence, Compaſſion is then a Fault, and next to 'them that do offend, are they to be reputed guilty, 'who have it in their Power, and to whoſe Station and 'Place it doth belong, ſhall yet take no Care to diſcoun-'tenance and puniſh that which the Laws of God and 'Men do aſſign proper Puniſhments for, &c.

'It becomes neceſſary to make an Example of notorious 'Offenders, partly for their own Sakes, whom when no-'thing elſe will, this may happen to reclaim; and much 'more for the ſake of others, that, as the Apoſtle ſaith, '*others may fear*, who when they ſhall ſee the Laws impar-'tially executed, are then likely, if ever, to be reformed, 'and prevented from committing the like Crimes, tho' 'otherwiſe tempted or diſpoſed to the Practice of them.

'There are Private Perſons who may obſerve, reprove, 'admoniſh, threaten, diſcover, complain, appeal, and 'who are to act as the Occaſion ſhall offer; and in-'deed without this little Good is to be done; becauſe thoſe 'that have Authority to puniſh, have not the Opportu-

nity

nity often of observing, so that, generally speaking, as a Reformation depends much upon a due Execution of the Laws, so it is as much depending upon a due Information; and which is so much the harder to find a Zeal for, because it is in them that undertake it, a voluntary Act, and to which they are by no other Law obliged ordinarily, than that of Conscience, and a true Zeal for the Honour of God, and the Good of Mankind, &c.

'Perhaps there is no Nation in the World that hath so good Laws against Immorality and Vice in all Instances of it, as ours: And therefore if the Execution correspond with the Law, there cannot but be a due Regularity amongst all Orders of Men. But the Laws of themselves are a dead Letter, and 'tis Accusation and Execution gives Life to them; and if either of these be wanting, that either it is not complain'd of (when notorious and there is a Necessity for it) or not punished upon the Complaint, the Nation it self is in Danger, and the Government must sink under the Weight of such Remisness, and all the evil Effects which follow such a Neglect, will be justly chargeable upon them, who either as private Christians, or Men in place, are obliged to stand up in maintaining those Laws in full Authority, which have been made amongst us, &c.

'What remains then, but that since we have all by Profession listed our selves under the Banner of our Lord and Saviour against Sin, the World, and the Devil, that we in our several Places and Capacities wage War with those Enemies of his Kingdom and our Salvation, that we, as St. *Jude* saith *ver.* 3. *be exhorted that we earnestly contend for the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints*, against all Irreligion, Blasphemy and Prophaneness, against all Wickedness and

'Immo-

'Immorality, and perſevere therein notwithſtanding all 'Diſcouragements whatſoever; and may this ſo be done 'to the end. But when I ſay *Diſcouragements*, I may re-'cal it, when we have not only the Protection, but the 'Authority and Command of Her preſent Majeſty to 'enforce it. When we have ſuch a viſible Succeſs attend-'ing this Undertaking. When that which was like '*Elijah*'s Cloud, as a Man's Hand, has extended it ſelf 'far and near, not only through many, if not moſt of the 'reformed Churches of *Europe*, but hath carried its tri-'umphant Banners even to *America*, and we hope, in 'conjunction with that ſo celebrated a Corporation now 'eſtabliſhed, may end as well in the Converſion of the 'Barbarous Natives of remote Parts to Chriſtianity, as 'of Chriſtians to a better and more religious Temper 'and State of Life.

'What Encouragement is this! or when had the 'Nation or Church a greater Glory attending it; when 'a Work ſo honourable to our Religion hath *England* 'appealing at the Head of it? So that upon the Proſ-'pect of what is in View, and of what is under Conſide-'ration amongſt us, God ſeems to have a Reſerve of 'Mercy for this Church and Nation, &c.

The Reverend Dr. *Willis*, in his Sermon preached to the Societies, *Decem.* 1703. thus expreſſes himſelf: 'As 'our Bleſſed Saviour was contented to do good notwith-'ſtanding all the Ingratitude and evil returns he met with; 'ſo he did at laſt lay down his Life in the ſame Cauſe. 'All this he underwent to do us good; and therefore I 'hope we ſhall not grudge a little of our pains and charge 'to carry on thoſe good Deſigns, for which he did and 'ſuffered ſo much, &c.

The Reverend Dr. Willis, Dean of Lincoln, his Sermon to the Societies for Reformation, preach'd Dec. 1703.

'I ſhall

'I ſhall take notice of ſome of thoſe Ways or Inſtan-
'ces, wherein more eſpecially we ought to do good to
'others, and whereby we may beſt ſerve the Deſign of
'our preſent meeting together.

1. 'We ought, as Providence puts it in our Power,
'to do what good we can to the Souls of Men; and as
'this is really the greateſt good we can do them; ſo there
'is no Man but may one way or other be ſerviceable in
'this reſpect, &c. And a great deal of this might be
'done without ſetting up for the Office of Miniſters,
'would Men, as I have ſhewed before, do the Duty of
'good Fathers and good Maſters, of good Magiſtrates,
'and good Friends, of good Men, and good Neighbours.

2. 'It is the Buſineſs of him that is a Magiſtrate, or
'to whom God has given Power, and Authority, and Re-
'putation in the World, to make uſe of thoſe advantages
'to reſtrain the Wickedneſs of Men, to prevent Publick
'Scandal, and to Incourage thoſe that do well. 'Tis cer-
'tainly the Duty of ſuch Perſons, tho' they cannot pre-
'vent all Vice, yet however to ſee that wickedneſs ſhan't
'openly and publickly brave it, that it ſhan't grow im-
'pudent and barefaced, and run down Piety and Religi-
'on. In ſhort, 'tis the Duty of thoſe in Power and Au-
'rity to ſtand up for the Cauſe of God, who gave them
'that Power, to be Men of Piety and Religion them-
'ſelves, and to do what they can that other People may
'be ſo too.

'I ſhall add only theſe Two Conſiderations on this
'Head, and then proceed:

1*ſt*, That

1*st*, That Wicked Men are, I won't ſay ſo zealous, but ſo buſie and active in promoting Wickedneſs in the World, in procuring Companions in Sin, and in making Lewdneſs and Debauchery eaſie to Mens Conſciences; that the World will be in great Danger of being overrun by it, if thoſe that are good wo'nt in ſome proportion indeavour to ſtop the Torrent; and take ſome pains to reclaim, as well as others to corrupt and debauch thoſe about them. And certainly this is one of all the Cauſes in the World that Men need not and ſhould not be baſhful in; for it is to be aſhamed of doing the beſt Work they can do; it is to be aſhamed of the Cauſe of God, and of their Religion; for 'tis Piety, and Virtue, and the Fear of God, that are our Religion more than any particular Opinions, and he that's aſhamed or afraid to profeſs and practiſe thoſe himſelf, or to promote them in others, is truly aſhamed of Chriſt and his Word; of which I ſhall ſay nothing but the Words of our Bleſſed himſelf, *Whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of me and of my Word in this Adulterous and Sinful Generation, of him ſhall the Son of Man be aſhamed when he comes in his Glory before his Father and the Holy Angels.*

2*dly*, The *Second* Conſideration I would propoſe is this, That many of us heretofore may have been too inſtrumental in the Devil's Service, and contributed towards the Corruption of the World, and the loſs of Souls, by our Influence or Authority, or evil Example; and therefore, as God expects we ſhould make Reparation for Wrong done according to our Power; it lies upon us to undo this as much as we can; eſpecially to endeavour to bring over thoſe Perſons we may have been the means of Corrupting; but if that be now out of our Power, either by reaſon of diſtance of place, or

diverſity of condition, or becauſe they are already entered upon their unchangeable State, or ſo hardened in Sin that we cannot do any good upon them; yet however, ſtill Reparation is to be made to the World for the Miſchief and Diſorder that may have been cauſed by this means, and eſpecially to our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, for the weakening his Kingdom, and the loſs of thoſe Souls he died to ſave.

'The laſt way I ſhall mention of doing good to the Publick is, That tho' we have no hand in Publick Offices or Affairs our ſelves, yet we ſhould do what we can in our private Capacity to encourage thoſe who are zealous to put Laws in Execution for the Publick Good, eſpecially for the Suppreſſing of Prophaneneſs and Immorality, as being one of the beſt Services they can do, both for the Church and the Kingdom: Our Duty with reſpect to ſuch Perſons is, to honour and eſteem them; to give them the Praiſe that is due to ſuch worthy Deſigns; to put the beſt Conſtruction upon their Actions; and by doing what we can to make the thing honourable to encourage others to do the ſame Zeal.

'It has been a great Diſcouragement to ſuch good Deſigns, that if Men are active to put Laws in Execution, they muſt provoke a great many whoſe Intereſt or whoſe Appetites are to be controuled and reſtrained, and ſuch as theſe will be clamorous and noiſy, and they will always find ſome to countenance them who affect the Reputation of being Wiſe by doing nothing, and by neither giving themſelves nor any Body elſe any trouble. And therefore on the other ſide, all that wiſh well to ſo good a Work ſhould ſtand up in their Defence, and give them their due Praiſe, and

make

make this, which is indeed the Cauſe of God, Honourable in the World.

'It is indeed the Duty of good Chriſtians to be Zealous in the Service of God whatever Treatment they meet with, to go through *evil Report* or *good Report* themſelves, ſo they can but bring Honour to God; and I queſtion not but there are a great many who would do it, and cheerfully too. But I am ſure it is not for the Honour of God, or the Good of the World that they ſhould be put upon this Trial. No, to reſpect ſuch Perſons is what the good cauſe they ingaged in requires from us, and what we ought in Gratitude to pay thoſe who are the Inſtruments of doing good to the World.'

'I would now in the laſt place addreſs my ſelf to thoſe worthy Perſons who are more particularly concerned in the occaſion of our preſent meeting together, Whether Magiſtrates, or Aſſiſtants to thoſe good Deſigns by their Advice and Contributions, or laſtly thoſe who by their Pains and Trouble in giving Informations inable the Magiſtrates more effectually to do their Duty.

'Your good Deſigns and the good Effects of them are now ſo manifeſt, that I need not give any particular account of them, and much leſs need to ſay any thing in their defence; what you have already done, and what you are ſtill doing does not require an Apology, but the Praiſe and Thankfulneſs of all good Men, of all thoſe that wiſh well either to Religion, or their Country; which I hope you have, and their Prayers too, that God would increaſe your Numbers, and ſtrengthen your Hands, and give a Bleſſing to your Endeavours.

I have all along hinted at many Arguments which 'may encourage you *not to be weary in well doing*, and 'therefore ſhall now only propoſe theſe two things more 'to your Conſideration and ſo conclude.

1. The firſt is this, That tho' the Work, in which you are engaged, be in it ſelf a Work of *Juſtice*, yet it is alſo a Work of the greateſt *Charity*. It is great Charity to 'the Souls of Men, to their Bodies, to their Families, 'and to all that belong to them, all which are great Sufferers by Vice and Immorality. It is frequently a 'great Charity and Kindneſs to the Offenders themſelves, 'who may be amended, or at leaſt reſtrained by the 'Correction of the Law: but it is always a Charity to 'our Country to prevent Diſorders in it, and to many 'particular Perſons who may be kept within Bounds by 'the Example of the Puniſhment of others.

'As a prudent reſtraint may preſerve a Man's Innocence, and prevent his Corruption, ſo it may bring 'him to Conſideration afterwards, and by that be the 'beginning of a ſincere Converſion. When a Perſon 'finds his way hedg'd up with Briars and Thorns, it 'may make him think of returning, and be more ready 'to hearken to the Monitions of his Conſcience, and the 'good Advice of Friends or Miniſters, and we have frequent Inſtances of the Converſions of Men which have 'had their beginning upon this Bottom; and therefore 'the removing Temptations, and the making Vice difficult and uneaſy by the execution of the Laws againſt it, 'is upon all accounts a great Charity.

2. The other Argument I would make uſe of to encourage your Zeal is this, That the engaging the Authority of the Law, and the Power of the Magiſtrates againſt

'againſt Immorality and Prophaneneſs, is the moſt like-
'ly Method to prevent the Judgments of God, which
'they may otherwiſe bring down upon our Church and
'Nation.

'National Sins deſerve National Judgments; and un-
'leſs God have ſome other wiſe Ends of his Providence
'to ſerve by ſparing ſuch a Nation, will very likely
'bring them down upon it; upon which account the
'beſt Service we can do our Country is, to endeavour by
'a general Reformation to appeaſe the Wrath of God:
'but if that cannot be done, however to turn the Edge
'of the Law, and the Authority of the Nation againſt
'Sin and Wickedneſs, which if we do, we have Reaſon
'to hope, that tho' the Offenders may be many, yet
'that God will not look upon the Wickedneſs to be
'National, nor Puniſh the whole for it, but let every
'Man bear his own Burthen, and the Guilt follow on-
'ly the particular Offenders.

'The laſt thing I would obſerve is this, That this
'Zeal of *Phineas*, which you ſee had ſuch great Effects,
'was only the Zeal of a ſingle Perſon; which ſhould be
'a great encouragement to us, to do our Duty, and to
'be Zealous for God and Religion, tho' we have not ſo
'many to joyn with us, as we might perhaps deſire. I
'am afraid that a great many are apt to be diſcouraged
'by thinking that all they can do will ſignifie very little,
'as to the main of Affairs, that if the World be wicked,
'it is like to be ſo ſtill, when they have done all they
'can, and that if God be angry with us for our Sins, it
'is not a ſingle Perſon, or a few that can turn away his
'Wrath; ſuch thoughts as theſe, I doubt, make too
'many lie quite ſtill, and neglect to do what otherwiſe
'they might and would do: but we ought to remember,

that

'that every one ſhould make this excuſe for himſelf, as 'it is certain one may make it as well as another, the 'World would quickly be a ſad place, and much worſe 'than it is; and on the other ſide, did none diſcourage 'themſelves by this, it might quickly be much better. 'We ought all therefore chearfully to do our Duties in 'our ſeveral Stations, and leave the event to God. It is 'not any one Soldier in an Army, that can, tho' by 'the greateſt Valour, do much toward the Succeſs of a 'War: but if every one ſhould under that pretence ex-'cuſe himſelf, they would then all together do nothing. 'We cannot tell how much good a Man may do in the 'World, that does heartily and ſeriouſly ſet about it: or 'how few People, that do with Zeal and Vigor ſet them-'ſelves againſt the wickedneſs of the Times, and hear-'tily intereed with God, may turn his Wrath away 'from us. We cannot but be all ſenſible what marks of 'his Diſpleaſure we felt in the late dreadful Storm, and in 'what a critical Poſture our Affairs now ſtand; and 'therefore how much it concerns us to make our Peace 'with him, leaſt he quite give us up.

'To Conclude all in a Word, We have this further 'encouragement to do our Duty, that if God ſhould, for 'the ſake of thoſe that are good among us, think fit to 'ſpare us, yet they, who do by their ill Lives and Neg-'ligence their part to provoke his Wrath, ſhall have all 'the Guilt of it to anſwer for in another World: and 'on the other ſide, there is this comfort for thoſe who 'do endeavour to ſtand in the Gap, that if notwithſtand-'ing all they can do yet Iniquity does ſtill ſo abound, that 'God ſhall think fit to give us up, their labour ſhall not 'be loſt; God will either ſave them from the common 'Calamity; or bleſs them under it, or, which will be 'better than all, by it bring them to Heaven.

It

It may not be an unneceſſary Caution that I now give you, notwithſtanding all theſe Encouragements and all the Advantages I have here laid before you for your engaging vigorouſly in this Noble Deſign, not to be eaſily diſcouraged by the ſmall Number of your Friends, or others, that may heartily concur with you in it, upon its being recommended to them, at the firſt eſpecially. The Number of zealous and prudent Chriſtians are, I doubt, few in compariſon with the Lukewarm and Prophane, in moſt Places, Four or Five of theſe will make a good Beginning in any Place, tho' they ſhould be of the Inferiour Rank; of which ſort of Men, I conceive, *Societies* may be more eaſily rais'd, not only becauſe theſe are of the far greater Number, but becauſe Men of Title and of great Eſtates, too ſeldom apply themſelves to Religious Undertakings, wherein much Trouble or Shame may be expected: Nor are you to be diſheartened by the backwardneſs of Magiſtrates, if it ſhould fare ſo hard with you, as that you have but one Magiſtrate near you that hath a juſt ſence of his Duty in this reſpect, and that will readily receive Informations; and others, in defiance of all their Obligations, in contempt of the repeated Commands of the Government, and in manifeſt contradiction to their * printed Orders of Seſſions, (wherein they formally invite good Chriſtians to give Informations againſt the Breaches of the Laws, and promiſe to give them all due Encouragement in it) will do it only becauſe they can't avoid it, and therefore act with Diſcouragement to faithful Officers, and ſuch other pious Perſons, as out of a Love to God and their Neighbour bring them Informations, by giving them unneceſſary Delays, and putting them under all manner of Diſcouragements when they attend upon them on this Occaſion: Nor by the Reproaches of bad Men, nay, of Friends and Relations, when you have the Laws of God and of the Nation,

* *Orders of Seſſions that encourage good Chriſtians and good Citizens to give Informations againſt Prophane and vicious Perſons.* Glouc. *July* 8. 1691. Middl. *Jul.* 9. 1691.

Her Majesty's, the late King's, and your late Representatives in Parliament Declarations, the publick Approbations of Ministers of State, so many Lords, Bishops, and Judges of Two Kingdoms, and of the Nobility and Clergy of the Third; the Assistance of those that are already engaged in this Undertaking, the Esteem and Prayers of other good Men, and your own Conscience on your side. If this is a good Work, such Discouragements as these are to be expected in so degenerate an Age as we are fallen into, since Oppositions, either publick or private, under one pretence or other, to good Designs, for the beating down of the Devil's Kingdom, have ever been in the World, and may, I think, ever be expected from wicked Men, who are the Devil's Instruments, whilst there are any such in it. Nay, such Obstructions as I have mentioned, and others of the same kind, have been, and may still be met with from many of those that are not only not accounted the worst sort of Men, but from whom Encouragement and Assistance in these Matters might reasonably be hop'd; tho' it may in truth, appear a very shocking thing, and I am apt to think will be so to the Ages to come, that such as are not thought to be the Enemies of God and Religion, should with any countenance continue to give open Obstructions to the Execution of the Laws against Profaneſs and Vice, and other charitable and proper Methods of furthering the Reformation of Mens Lives, and the Saving of their Country from ruine; and especially that they should do this in a Protestant Country, where these Methods have been approv'd in so publick and solemn a manner, by so many Persons in Authority in Church and State, that few, if any good Designs that have been set on foot in it, or in any other Christian Country, have ever been. Oppositions, and even Sufferings, when they encounter us in this glorious Cause,

are

Lond. 1691. Heref. Oct. 8. 1691. Back. Oct. 8. 1691. Bod. 1692. Midd. 1692 Lon. 1693. Midd. 1693 Lon. 1696. Lon. 1697. Midd. 1698 Lon. 1698. Gloſt. 1698. Midd. 1699 Lon. 1699. Linc. 1700 Lon. 1700. Salop 1700 Surry 1700 Linc. 1701. Weſtm. *Ap.* 8. 1702. Middl. *Apr.* 13. 1702. Surry. *Ap.* 14. 1702. Southampt. *Ap* 14. 1702 Somerſet *Ap* 14. 1702. Lond. *April* 15. 1702. Preſton. *Ap* 16. 1702. Manchester *April* 23. 1702. Suſſex *Apr.* 1702. Briſtol *Apr.* 1702. Cheſter *Ap.* 1702. Glouceſter *Apr.* 1702. Monmouth *May* 26. 1702. *&c.* Salop 1703.

are then, I think, to be born with Patience, if not with Cheerfulneſs, out of a Love to God and our Neighbour, and in hopes of an everlaſting Recompence for all our Sufferings in the Cauſe of our Lord and Maſter on the other ſide of the Grave.

To conclude, Sir, you are, I hope, by this time of opinion, that there hath not been a matter of greater Conſequence propoſed to you perhaps in your Life, or a greater opportunity offered you of doing more good to the World, nor probably ever may be. God grant that you may have a right Underſtanding of it, and a Will to act accordingly, zealouſly to purſue all proper Methods of Reformation, ſo as may be moſt for the Honour of God, the Intereſt of Mankind, and your everlaſting Comfort. I may poſſibly, Sir, in a Month or two, deſire of you the Trouble, I hope I might more juſtly ſay the Pleaſure, of an Account of ſome conſiderable Progreſs that you have made in this great Affair, directed to ſuch a place as I may give you notice of in my Letter, when I may ſend you ſuch other Directions as may be thought neceſſary; tho I preſume, that theſe I have now communicated to you, with thoſe contained in the Books I herewith ſend you, and which your own Judgment and Experience may ſupply you with, may, generally ſpeaking, be ſufficient not only for yours and your Friends acting vigorouſly and with Advantage in the Places near you, but to enable you and them to ſet this Matter on foot in any Town or larger Village of the Kingdom, where you have an Acquaintance with, or but the bare Knowledg of any religious and tolerably prudent Perſon, to whom you may know how to ſend the Books I have mentioned; and ſhall communicate the Directions I have given you in this long Letter, for your full Inſtruction in this pious Work. *SIR*,

Yours.

POSTSCRIPT.

I Should, Sir, tell you, that the little Diſcourſes againſt *Prophane Swearing* and *Curſing*, *Drunkenneſs*, *Uncleanneſs*, and *Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*, &c. and the *Anſwer to the Scandalous Objections that are made againſt thoſe pious and uſeful Perſons as, out of a Love to God and their Neighbour, give Informations to the Magiſtrates of theſe Enormities*, which are ſent you, with the other Books, may be given to ſuch as are guilty of any of theſe Offences, and eſpecially by ſuch as inform againſt them, and at that time that they are convicted of theſe Offences, by the Magiſtrates, (with whom, or their Clerks, ſome Number of them may be lodg'd, to be thus diſpoſed of) for the furthering of their Repentance for their Sin, that they may avoid the everlaſting Puniſhment of it, at a time when they are ſo apt to be awakened to Conſideration, and a ſenſe of their Sin, which are great Steps toward Converſion, by the Temporal Puniſhment and Shame that is inflicted upon them; and that moreover ſuch Offenders may be fully convinc'd, that the Perſons that bring them to Puniſhment do therein as becomes good Chriſtians, and Members of the Community, for religious Ends, and with charitable Intentions towards them; and may not therefore add to their Sin and Folly by entertaining any unchriſtian Reſentments for their thus acting: and this is a Method that I find recommended by thoſe that are concerned in ſome of the *Societies for Reformation*, who have given away, at their own Expence, a great many thouſands of them, beſides about Ten Thouſand of the larger Books which I have ſent you relating to this Deſign, and a vaſt number of other Books for the awakening of Men to a Senſe of their Sins,

Sins, and care of their Souls. I might have likewiſe added, that this great Work may be very much promoted by yours and your Friends acquainting well-inclined Perſons, that they may be very ſerviceable in buying up and giving away any of theſe Books, as of the *Account of the Societies*, and the *Help to Reformation*, which are now, for the General Benefit of the Publick, ſold at a very unuſual cheap rate.

The Obligations of a Juſtice of the Peace,

To be diligent in the Execution of the *Penal Laws* againſt *Prophaneneſs* and *Debauchery*, for the Effecting of a *National Reformation*.

In a Letter to a Friend.

SIR,

I Gave you in my laſt long Letter an Account of the *Progreſs* of the *Reformation of Manners*; and I could not but hope that you would be well pleaſed to hear, that the *Endeavours* of it, that have ſo lately obtain'd the Approbation and Countenance of many of the *Lords*, *Biſhops* and *Judges* of the Kingdoms of *England* and *Ireland*, and of the *Nobility* and *Clergy* of *Scotland*, have been ſucceſsful for the giving a Check to the horrid Debauchery and Impieties of the Age; that Attempts of this kind were likewiſe carrying on in our Neighbouring and ſome more remote Nations; and in ſeveral of them, by the Influence of our Endeavours here, which may give you juſt hopes not only of a further Reformation in thoſe Countries, but that this great Work will be ſet on foot in other parts of the World, when the Account of the *Scheme* and *Succeſs* of our *Endeavours* therein, which is now tranſlating into the more general Languages, are known to them. And having done this more particularly in that long Letter, I then offered you ſome Motives and Directions for your engaging with more Ad-

vantage

vantage in this Noble Undertaking: But I conſider'd you, Sir, therein only as a private Chriſtian, and a good Member of the Community, as one without any publick Authority, and under no other Obligations to be active in this pious Work than what your Religion in general, and your Baptiſmal Engagements (whereby you were liſted in your Lord and Maſter's Service, againſt the Devil's Kingdom) laid upon you, which I hope, you thought ſufficient to engage you in it; but having underſtood, that ſince the Regulation of the *Commiſſion of the Peace* in your County, you are put into that Commiſſion, I take the freedom to lay before you ſome other Conſiderations that are proper and more peculiar to you, as you are in that publick Capacity.

And give me leave, *Sir*, to put you in mind, that beſides your Obligations as a Chriſtian and a Member of the Community, to concur in promoting this hopeful Reformation, you are, if you take upon you this Commiſſion, under other Engagements, as you are a *Magiſtrate*, and have taken an Oath and a publick Truſt upon you to execute the Laws; which ſurely, *Sir*, are very great and indiſpenſible Obligations. But further, by your being inveſted with Authority, you have thereby a manifeſt Advantage for the furthering of this Work, which private Perſons are alſo without, who, notwithſtanding all their Diſadvantages, act herein with great Concern and Succeſs, in moſt Parts of the Kingdom, and who, by doing ſo, are as it were Eyes and Hands to Magiſtrates, and give them a ſtill greater Advantage, and which do make ſuch Magiſtrates as do not exerciſe their Authority, and endeavour to diſcharge their Obligations in ſome meaſure as they ought, now appear more inexcuſable.

If then 'tis ſo evident, that Magiſtrates are thus under various and indiſpenſible Obligations to execute the Laws

for

for the ſuppreſſing of *Vice* and *Prophaneneſs*, can any Magiſtrates that are willing to acquit themſelves herein as they ought, think that they ought to do leſs, tho they ſhould therein receive Diſcouragements from wicked Men, and from ſome perhaps of their own Body, than to ſuppreſs the open Violations of thoſe Laws, when they come to have a Knowledg of them, as *Prophane Swearing* and *Curſing*, by Perſons of what Quality ſoever; than to take their Walks ſometimes, as ſome truly honourable Magiſtrates here do (whoſe Names will ſurely be mention'd with Honour in the Records of Ages to come) to obſerve what Diſorders there are committed in their Corporations, or other Places near them; to inſpect into publick Houſes on the *Lord's Day*, as the Juſtices of *Middleſex* have formerly, and very lately agreed among themſelves to do (as appears by their * printed Orders of Seſſions) for the puniſhing and preventing of *Tipling* in them; and to hinder *Drovers*, *Carriers*, &c. travelling on that Day; and to ſend out their Conſtables for the ſame purpoſe on the *Lord's Day*; and on other Days of the Week ordering of them to go about the Streets, and into the Markets, and other publick Places, to take up *Swearers*, *Drunkards*, and *lewd Perſons*, out of Houſes of ill Fame, and to bring 'em before them to be puniſh'd (which Conſtables may do without a Warrant from a Juſtice) and to make examples of ſuch Officers as they find negligent in their Duty in theſe Matters; and more eſpecially to give diſpatch, reſpect, and all poſſible Encouragement to ſuch pious and highly uſeful Perſons, as often with great Trouble, Difficulty and Hazard (and too frequently with greater Damage and Charge to them than the Penalty, which the Law inflicts on the prophane and vicious Perſons that they inform againſt, amounts to) for the ſuppreſſing of the Diſhonour that is ſo openly offer'd to Almighty

God

* *Middleſex Order Jan.* 13. 169½. *Middleſex April* 13. 1702.

God, the temporal and eternal Ruin of their Fellow-Chriſtians, and of national Judgments, bring them Informations of any of the Diſorders that I have mentioned, or any other Breaches of the Laws of the ſame kind; to which they have been incited and incouraged by his Majeſty's *Proclamations*, the * printed *Orders of Seſſions* of the Juſtices of the Peace of many Counties and Cities of the Kingdom, the Diſcourſes of many of our Reverend Divines lately publiſh'd, and the *Circular Letter* of the Lord Arch-biſhop of *Canterbury*, dated *Apr.* 4. 1699. in which the Biſhops of that Province concurr'd; wherein, as I told you in my laſt, Miniſters are directed by their Biſhops to put the Laity in mind that 'tis their Duty to give ſuch Informations, and to meet frequently together, to conſult upon the moſt adviſable Methods of doing it; and ſuch Meetings, and others of this kind, which we call *Societies for Reformation of Manners*, and which ſo many Perſons in Authority in Church and State have in ſo publick and ſolemn a manner declar'd their high Approbation of, do give Magiſtrates mighty Advantages for the effectual ſuppreſſing of our Debauchery and Impieties, and muſt, *Sir*, give you and other Magiſtrates that have a ſenſe of their Duty in this reſpect, a great encouragement to be zealous in it.

I ſhall not, *Sir*, after I have laid before you your Obligations, and many and great Advantages for your furthering this Noble Work, repreſent to you how dishonourable it is in its ſelf, and may e'er long appear to the whole Nation, for Magiſtrates to take ſolemn Oaths and Truſts upon them to execute Laws, and to be groſly negligent therein, and even to obſtruct the Execution of thoſe Laws wherein the Intereſt of Religion is unqueſtionably ſo much concern'd, after they have in their *printed Orders* aſſur'd the World they would do the contrary; nor the many and fatal Miſchiefs that ſuch unhappy Magiſtrates bring

* Orders of Seſſions that *encourage good* Chriſtians and good Citizens to give Informations to Magiſtrates againſt prophane and vicious Perſons.
Glouceſter July 8. 1691.
Middleſex July 9. 1691.
London 1691.
Hereford Oct. 5. 1691.
Buckingham Oct. 8. 1691.
Bodmin 169½.
London 169⅔.
Middl. 1692.
Middl. 1693.
London 169⅚.
London 1697.
Middl. 169⅞.
London 1698.
Gloceſt. 1698.
Middl. 169⅝.
London 1699.
Lincoln 1700.
London 1700.
Salop 1700.
Surry 1700.
Lincoln 1701.
Weſtminſter Apr. 8. 1702.
Middleſex Apr. 13. 1702.
Surry Apr. 14. 1702.
Southampton Apr. 14. 1702.

Somerſet Apr. 14. 1702. *London Apr.* 15. 1702. *Preſton Apr.* 16. 1702. *Mancheſter Apr.* 23. 1702. *Suſſex Ap.* 1702. *Briſtol Ap.* 1702. *Cheſter Ap.* 1702. *Glouceſter Apr.* 1702. *Monmouth May* 26. 1702, *&c.*

bring on Multitudes of particular Perſons, and on the Nation in general, and conſequently, what a heavy load of Guilt they do thereby contract, who have no regard to their Duty in any Inſtances of it that I have herein mention'd, and do thereby evidently obſtruct the *Reformation of Manners* that is ſo happily carrying on not only in theſe Three Kingdoms, but in other Parts of the World; his Majeſty by his *Proclamations*, and our late Repreſentatives in Parliament by their *Addreſs* to him, having publickly declar'd, *That the Debauchery and Prophaneneſs of the Nation is chiefly owing to the Negligence of Magiſtrates in the Execution of their Office, and their ill Example*; which ought to be ſo dreadful a Conſideration to all that are concerned in the Charge, that I ſhall not offer to aggravate it: I chuſe rather to ſay, that as any former Remiſneſs of Magiſtrates, or perhaps Backwardneſs of your Brethren, or of the Magiſtrates of your County, can by no means be allowed to be a ſufficient Excuſe for your neglecting to do what you have unqueſtionable Authority, great Advantages, (at this time more eſpecially) and many Engagements upon you to do; ſo in the faithful Diſcharge of your Duty, you may render your ſelf a Bleſſing to your Country, and to the whole Kingdom; nay, by your zealous Execution of your Truſt and Authority in theſe matters at this Juncture, and by the Influence of your good Example, you may be in ſome degree inſtrumental in the reforming not only of *Chriſtendom*, but of Mankind; and this will moreover undoubtedly procure you the Approbation of your own Conſcience, and the Applauſe of good Men, and may be a means of your obtaining an everlaſting Recompence in the next World. Which is ſincerely wiſh'd by,

SIR,

Yours.

The Presentment of the Gentlemen of the Grand Jury for the County of Middlesex, *on* Monday *the* 2d. *of* June, 1701. *to the Court of the* King's-Bench.

HIS Majesty by his repeated Proclamations having taken Notice with great Concern, of the open and avowed Practice of *Vice* and *Prophaneness* in this Kingdom, to the high Displeasure of Almighty God, and great Scandal of Christianity; and that this hath been occasioned in a great measure by the Neglect of putting in Execution those good Laws which have been made for the Suppressing and Punishing thereof.

And His Majesty having strictly charged and commanded all his Subjects, in their several Places and Stations, to be very vigilant and strict in the Discovery and effectual Prosecution and Punishment of all Persons who shall be guilty of *Blasphemy, Prophane Swearing and Cursing, excessive Drinking, Lewdness, Prophanation of the Lord's Day*, or other Dissolute, Immoral or Disorderly Practices, as they will answer it to Almighty God, and upon pain of his highest Displeasure.

And we the Grand Inquest of this County, having received an excellent Charge from this Honourable Court, enjoining our Enquiry into the Matters aforesaid, We think our selves obliged to take Notice of the great Advantages which this Country has received from the Zeal and Diligence of good Magistrates putting the Laws in Execution against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, and likewise of those worthy Gentlemen and Divines, who in this County meet in *Societies*, for the effectual assisting them therein, and who have been incouraged thereunto by the publick Approbation of many of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Honourable Judges.

Yet notwithstanding, through the Negligence of Constables, Headboroughs, and other Inferior Officers, the Execution of the said Laws is very much obstructed, to the great Encouragement of Offenders, and Prejudice of the Publick.

We do therefore preſent ſuch of the Conſtables and Headboroughs as we have found negligent in the Execution of their Offices.

The Preſentment of the Grand Jury for the City of London, *at* Juſtice-Hall *in the* Old-Bailey, *the* 4th *Day of* June, 1701. *and Ordered by the Court to be Printed.*

THIS Honourable Court having taken Notice, in the admirable Charge given to us, of the great Advantages which this City hath received from the Zeal and Induſtry of thoſe Gentlemen and Citizens, who, in and about this City, are concerned in *Societies*, for the Promoting more effectually the Execution of the Laws againſt *Prophaneneſs* and *Debauchery*, in purſuance to His Majeſty's Proclamations, and who have received the publick Approbation of many Perſons in high Stations in Church and State.

We the Grand Jury of this City, do think it becomes us to return our hearty Thanks to thoſe worthy Perſons who are thus engaged in *Societies*, for the Promoting a *Reformation of Manners*, ſo abſolutely neceſſary to our Welfare; and we hope their engaging ſo heartily in this Noble Deſign, will be an Encouragement to others to join with them, for the effecting a more general Reformation.

The Preſentment of the Grand Jury for the County of Buckingham, *at the Aſſizes held for the ſaid County,* 1701.

BEing encouraged by His Majeſty's Proclamation now read to us, as alſo by your Lordſhip's moſt excellent Charge, we the Grand Jury of the County of Bucks, do think we can do no leſs than to take notice of the ſeveral Societies

cieties erected for the Promoting of a *Reformation of Manners*; and particularly we desire to return our hearty Thanks to those worthy Gentlemen and Clergy who meet Monthly at *Wendover*, in the said County, in order to effect the same. And we hope their appearing in so pious a Design, will animate others to come in and join with them. And this we present as the particular Sentiment of us, whose Names are hereunto Subscribed.

The Presentment of the Gentlemen of the Grand-Inquest for the Assizes held at Northampton, *for the said County, the* 3d *day of* March, 1701.

WHen we reflect on the many Blessings we enjoy under His Majesty's auspicious Reign, and pious Care, manifested by repeated Proclamations, to preserve us from *Vice* and *Immoralities*, (Enemies that have a very fatal Influence on a Nation and Kingdom) we cannot but think it a suitable Expression of our Gratitude and Duty at this time, to declare our Readiness and Resolution, in our respective Stations to comply with His Majesty's Commands, by endeavouring, that not only such as are guilty of *Prophane Swearing* and *Cursing*, *Excessive Drinking*, *Lewdness*, and other dissolute Practices, may be brought to deserved Punishment; but also that the Negligencies of Constables, Headboroughs, and other Inferior Officers, and such as keep disorderly publick Houses, wherein the *Lord's-Day* is so frequently Prophaned by unnecessary Resorts thereunto, may be Punished according to Law.

And we take this Occasion to return our hearty Thanks to those worthy Persons who meet in *Societies*, and have signalized their Zeal by Promoting a more general *Reformation of Manners* in this Kingdom; a Method approved and recommended by the concurrent Suffrages of many Noble Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Learned Judges, both in this and our Neighbouring Nation.

The Presentment of the Gentlemen of the Grand Inquest for the County of Southampton, *at the Assizes held at* Winton-Castle, *the* 4th *day of* March, 1701.

COmmanded by His Majesty's most excellent Proclamation against *Vice*, *Immorality* and *Prophaneness*, in pursuance of your Lordship's Directions, excited by the Pious Zeal of many worthy Persons engaged in *Societies* for the Promoting the Glorious Design thereof, encouraged by that visible Success their joint Endeavours have, through God's Blessing, had in many Parts of this Kingdom towards effecting a *Reformation of Manners*: We take this Opportunity to express our Satisfaction thereat, and to profess our readiness to contribute our Assistance for the Advancement of so good a Work, and crave leave to lay before your Lordship and this Honourable Bench, that we conceive the great Obstruction and Impediments hereunto do proceed, not only from the Negligence of Constables and other Officers in their respective Places, but also from the multitude of disorderly Ale-Houses, wherein not only excessive drinking, and other vicious Practices are promoted, but also an Opportunity given to dissolute and profligate Fellows resorting thereunto, to entice and allure Young Persons into wicked Confederacies, and *Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*.
We therefore humbly hope, that all Magistrates, in their respective Stations, will use their utmost Endeavours to discourage and punish such Evil Practices.

The Presentment of the Grand-Jury of the County of Nottingham, *at the Assizes held for the said County, the* 14th *day of* March, 1701.

THE Honourable Court having in their Charge to us, pressed the Obligation we lie under, to make diligent Enquiry into the Breach of those Excellent Laws made for the Suppressing

Suppreſſing of *Imorality* and *Prophaneneſs*, do think it becomes us, for the Encouragement of all ſuch Perſons who have voluntarily form'd themſelves into *Societies*, and by their joint Endeavours have made themſelves more capable to be inſtrumental for the *Reformation of Manners*, to take notice of their pious Zeal, and alſo of the viſible Succeſs that hath through the Bleſſing of God, accompanied their Endeavours for obtaining the aforeſaid End in many Parts of this Kingdom.

We crave leave to lay before your Lordſhips and this Honourable Bench, that we conceive a great Obſtruction and Impediment to this moſt excellent Deſign, proceeds not only from the neglect of Conſtables and other Officers in their reſpective Places, but alſo from the great Numbers of Diſorderly Ale-Houſes in this Town, to which many idle and diſſolute Perſons do frequently reſort, and allure others into the like vile Practices and Debaucheries with themſelves; which publick Grievance, there have been ſome Endeavours to redreſs, that have not yet met with the deſired Succeſs.

We therefore humbly beg and hope, That all Magiſtrates and others, would contribute their utmoſt Endeavours for the Redreſs of thoſe Publick Grievances, and for the encouragement of the aforeſaid *Societies*, which will animate others that fear the Lord, are faithful Subjects to Her Majeſty Queen *Anne*, (whom God preſerve) and true Lovers of their Country, to join with them.

The Preſentment of the Grand-Jury for the County of Monmouth, *at the General Aſſizes held at* Monmouth, *the* 26th *day of* March, 1702.

HIS late Majeſty's Proclamation againſt *Immorality* and *Vice*, back'd by the excellent Charge we receiv'd from your Lordſhip at this preſent Juncture, hath obliged us ſeriouſly to weigh the ſeveral Inconveniencies that follow our too tender putting in Practice thoſe wholſome Laws injoin'd by

by our former Legiſlators, as well again *Profaners* of the *Sabbath*, as other egregious Criminals.

The being rob'd of ſo good and glorious a Prince we have lately been bereaved of, cannot but be reckon'd among our greateſt Calamities: But we dare not tax Heaven with Severity for the ſame, when we conſider that our Provocations have juſtly diſarm'd us of ſo good a Guard. We muſt acknowledge that our Sufferings are of our own creating, and our Puniſhments proceed from a general Guilt of our own. We ſhall not therefore pretend to extenuate our Failings, by recriminating upon Inferior Officers; but do hereby promiſe, That nothing on our Parts ſhall be wanting for the future, (either as Chriſtians or Magiſtrates) to aſſiſt thoſe that are already entred into *Societies* for ſtopping that Inundation of Vice we ſee ready to overflow us, or to encourage others in ſo worthy an Undertaking: hoping thereby as well to ingratiate our ſelves to that Omnipotent provoked Power, as to enervate that Prince who grows upon our Weakneſſes, and eſtabliſheth his Empire upon the Ruine of our Religion, and Contempt of our Laws.

The Preſentmnnt of the Grand Jury for the County of Derby, *at the Aſſizes held for the ſaid County,* April 14. 1702.

COmmanded by Her Majeſty's moſt excellent Proclamation againſt *Vice*, *Immorality* and *Prophaneneſs*, excited by the pious Zeal of many Worthy Perſons engaged in Societies for promoting the Glorious Deſign thereof, encouraged by the great Succeſs their joint Endeavours have had (by the Bleſſing of Almighty God) in many parts of this Kingdom, towards effecting a *Reformation of Manners*. We take this Opportunity (encouraged thereunto by the Charge this Day given to us) to expreſs our great Satisfaction therein, to profeſs our Readineſs to contribute our utmoſt Aſſiſtance for the

the Advancement of ſo good a Work, and to crave leave to lay before you, Her Majeſty's Juſtices of the Peace,

That we humbly conceive, the great Obſtructions and Impediments thereunto, do proceed not only from the Negligence of Conſtables and other Inferior Officers in their reſpective Places, but alſo from the Multitude of unneceſſary Ale-Houſes both in Market-Towns, and the ſmaller Villages, wherein not only exceſſive Drinking, and other vicious Practices are promoted, but alſo an Opportunity given to diſſolute and profligate Fellows reſorting thereunto, to entice and allure Young Perſons into *wicked Confederacies*.

We cannot doubt but that, whenſoever any Perſons ſhall have Occaſion to reſort to you with any Informations againſt Offenders, in order to their Conviction and Puniſhment, they will have all due encouragement and Diſpatch.

And we do humbly conceive, that *Prophaneneſs* and *Immorality* would not ſo ſhamefully abound, as now they do among us, if an Order of Seſſions was directed to all Conſtables and other Inferior Officers, ſtrictly requiring them diligently to do their Duties, in diſcovering and bringing to condign Puniſhment ſuch Perſons as ſhall dare to offend againſt thoſe excellent Laws which are provided, and by our Pious and Gracious Queen commanded to be put in Execution, for the ſuppreſſing of *Vice*.

And we do humbly pray, that an Order of Seſſions may be made and directed accordingly.

FINIS.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

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